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WHY TWO EPISCOPAL METHODIST CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES?

A BRIEF HISTORY ANSWERING THIS QUESTION FOR THE BENEFIT OF EPWORTH LEAGUERS AND OTHER YOUNG METHODISTS.

BY WILLIAM A. BOWEN,

General Agent and Staff Correspondent of the Texas Christian Advocate, Late Member of the West Texas Conference.

DISCARD

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Dedicated

TO THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER,

WHO WAS A TRUE CHRISTIAN IN HER HOME LIFE
AND AT ALL TIMES; AND

TO MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER,

WHO HAVE INSPIRED AND HELPED ME IN "EVERY GOOD
WORD AND WORK."

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INTRODUCTION.

THE right of past events to a just and impartial record is beyond any challenge. History is the first science of civilization, and to suppress or purposely obscure its facts is to commit a crime against truth, whose ultimate vindication is to rest upon the completed story of humanity. Ecclesiastical and secular history alike demand to be settled in unequivocal phrases, devoid of prejudice and the spirit of partisanism. How difficult it is to do this last, it requires no argument to show. It would seem, though, that the task of impartiality is the more difficult when the matters discussed appertain to religious opinions and ecclesiastical administrations. Great sympathy, therefore, must be felt for the author of the present volume, who undertakes to recite the story of the most momentous period in the history of Episcopal Methodism, the largest and most influential Protestant body in America. This period, though brief, was marked by the creation of issues and the announcement of opinions that severed the ecclesiastical communities of the continent, and influenced in a more or less direct way the secular events of the half century following; and though the animosities of that time have largely passed away, the facts have an important bearing upon the attitudes and opinions of these communities to-day. The difficulty of dealing with the discussions of this period has been attested by the failure of quite every effort hitherto made in this direction. American Methodism looks for the work that shall treat the era of separation in the spirit of his-

torical fairness and impartiality. Such a work must become a classic and find a permanent place in our denominational literature. Is that long-looked for contribution to history to be found in the present volume? That must be left for the reader to decide. We should by this time be sufficiently removed from the unhappy scenes of 1844 to be able to write, either side for the other, a story of the "Separation" such as each could accept. Outside of the uses of history, there is an allowable demand to know the facts as they fell out. We believe that the inquiry as pursued through these pages is constantly directed toward an examination of the record. If at times the language seems tinged with feeling, it must, we believe, be referred to the interest of the writer in his theme rather than to any purpose to write down injustice or display unbrotherly resentment. "Why Two Methodisms?" is a question constantly coming up in many parts of our Connection. It is better to know the whole truth, though it were distasteful, than to possess only an imperfect understanding of it, or be compelled to take garbled accounts of the record. This book gives a survey of the field. If the author's account does not satisfy you, then it may lead you at least to do as he has done: examine the record for yourself.

H. M. Du Bose.

Nashville, July 8, 1901.

PREFACE.

DARING indeed would be the person who attempted to give the world anything new in Methodist history—that is, as to fact. So ably and completely has this field been cultivated that little could be produced that would be new and true, or true and new. I claim to have brought forth nothing new as to fact. But in the grouping of important facts, and in the manner of their presentation, there is always room for newness, for originality. The only question of difficulty would be: what good purpose could be served by such an attempt?

I may claim for this volume one or two things as an excuse for its appearance that will prove its need at this time, without overstepping ordinary lines of modesty. The question it sets itself to answer has never been attempted in any work coming to my notice. That it should be answered (and must be before Methodism can ever again be in fact one even in purpose and heart), I think no one will dispute who loves "our Zion." The force of this question, and the vital necessity to all Methodists of an answer that would be truthful and complete, came to me eighteen years ago in a way that would not admit of equivocation. I was a layman and member of the official board of a city Church when much feeling was engendered by "the other Methodist Church" sending a preacher and money into our midst and erecting a handsome church building. I could see no reason why they should not be welcomed: my brethren (all

much older than I) differed with me. There was no fraternity—nor hardly politeness—felt or shown between the two Churches. My brethren, nor my pastor, could not give me the reasons why they felt justified in their opposition; but hinted at a compact, an agreement, etc. We all then felt the necessity of knowing, Why are there still two Methodist Episcopal Churches? so as to give a reason for these things. I soon found how difficult was the task I set myself. Excepting a large number of magazine, review, and newspaper articles (of course practically inaccessible to most people), I found a paucity of matter bearing on the subject. The histories published were from one source and standpoint, for the most part. This led me to seek, by conversations with old men, North and South, who antedated the separation of 1844, to satisfy my mind from original sources. Making notes of these things, I was put in possession here and there of very valuable, out-of-print works by actors in the great events that I was studying. I soon saw that there was little cause for astonishment that so few Methodists, North and South, knew the real facts. They were to be found succinctly set forth in no single work; and not to be found complete anywhere, except by an enormous amount of reading and great labor of grouping and comparing.

In the South I found a general idea prevailing that the Methodist Episcopal Church, North (I use that affix simply to be clear as to which branch is meant), had been separated from the Southern branch by the war; that they had somehow wronged the South, but no reason now remained for staying apart except prejudice. In the North (where I lived and labored with the Church in a metropolitan city some years

with delight and to my edifying) I found pretty much the same idea prevailing, with even less general possession of the exact facts. I felt then that some one should give the truth of the whole question to the world; or, at least, to Methodists. No one else having undertaken it, and the desires, inclinations, and efforts of our younger Methodists—especially through the great Epworth League movement—showing manifest leanings toward that union of heart, mind, and purpose which can be possible only where they thoroughly understand and know each other, I decided to undertake the task.

Some one had to make a beginning—for this is a pioneer undertaking—at least in purpose and scope. But when determined on and begun, its magnitude appalled me. Had I not felt that God would sustain and help, overruling my imperfections for good, I had long since dropped it. It has necessitated a tremendous amount of reading, in fresh fields and old. My object is to set forth the difference that caused the great separation in 1844, showing the growth and progress of that difference—and the two branches remain apart. I have endeavored to give the truth as it is and has been from the beginning. And, as far as any person can, I have tried to write it without giving a bias to one or the other side—from the standpoint of one who views not from a Northern or Southern angle, but from that of one who loves Methodism. The truth, yet exact truth, has been my sole aim.

That my task has been performed unsatisfactorily is evident to no one as plainly as to me. But there is much satisfaction in the thought that the real student in history, being aware of the almost unending toil necessary to a comprehensive grasp of any his-

torical truth, will be my most lenient critic. I cannot hope to satisfy all; but I ask every reader to carefully go through this little book before passing judgment, and then to compare what has been written with the records of facts as they were made when first acted, and then to judge this book by what I earnestly aimed to do rather than by the way it is done. If I shall have induced a more capable and entertaining pen to complete as it should be the task I felt called on to attempt, my labor will be more than not merely in vain; it will have been a success.

It is impossible, in this already too long preface, to give credit to all the authors to whom I am indebted in this work, much less to verbal statements by actors in much of the history, many of whom have since been called to "the Church triumphant." Besides these, I have freely used newspaper, magazine, and review articles when the position of the writers had been such as to make them original sources of information. These latter gave me material for much of what I give concerning the times from 1840 to the present day, supplemented by what I obtained from living participants, North and South. In respect to this latter source of information my opportunities were rare and large, and I trust not misused. In getting the exact facts as they were from the beginning, and all along our Church's history to 1840, I have carefully read every work I could obtain. In my limited time and opportunity these were not so many as, I believe, they were authoritative. If my manner of presenting the truth will not meet with general approval, I believe no one will be able to disprove a single stated fact nor dispute its fairness.

For the general history of Methodism I consulted

the following: "The Journal of Rev. John Wesley, A.M.," by John Emory; Richard Watson's "Life of Rev. John Wesley," with observations by Robert Southey; "Life and Times of Rev. Jesse Lee," by Rev. L. M. Lee; "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," by Nathan Bangs, D.D.; "Life of Wesley," by Dr. T. O. Summers; "Life and Times of Bishop McKendree," by Bishop Paine; "Asbury's Journal;" "Life of Wesley and Rise and Progress of Methodism," by Robert Southey; "Memoirs of the Wesley Family," by Dr. Adam Clarke; "Life and Times of Rev. John Wesley," by Rev. L. Tyerman; "History of Methodism," by Abel Stevens; "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," by Dr. Stevens; "Methodism in Charleston," by Rev. F. A. Mood; Discipline of 1789. Some of those relating to the years since 1840 (and incidentally before) are: "Platform of Methodism," by M. M. Henkle; "Life of Bishop Capers," by Bishop Wightman; "Life of Dr. John B. McFerrin," by Bishop Fitzgerald; "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," official; "A Hundred Years of Methodism," by Bishop Simpson; "The Story of Methodism," by A. B. Hyde, D.D.; "Four Eventful Years," by Dr. J. F. Berry; "Proceedings of the Centennial Methodist Conference;" "A History of Methodism," by Bishop McTyeire; "A Constitutional History of Methodism," by J. J. Tigert, D.D., LL.D.

I ask a kindly consideration of this little book, and pray that its object may be accomplished: the complete fraternal union of all Methodists.

I am especially indebted to Dr. H. M. Du Bose, General Secretary of the Epworth League of our Church, and editor of the *Epworth Era,* who so kindly

read and corrected the proof sheets for me, and took the time amid his most arduous official labors to make valuable suggestions in the setting forth of these almost unknown facts of history; and for his able Introduction to the book. The life work, ability, and scholarship of Dr. Du Bose, together with the intimate relation his present official position bears to those whom this book is chiefly designed to benefit, make him preëminently the man to pass judgment on a book of this kind.

W. A. B.

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WHY TWO EPISCOPAL METHODIST CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES?

CHAPTER I.

From Effect to Cause—One in Doctrine—Apostolical Succession.

It seems to be an unwritten but unvarying law that masterly minds, when fired by zeal and earnestness in a cause affecting humanity, will differ concerning the minor questions of the cause; or, more correctly, there will be differences over questions arising from rather than over essential principles vital to the cause. And the apparent acuteness of the divergences will appear at greater angles in proportion to the importance of the cause espoused. It was the operation of this law (for such it seems) that divided the most devout Jews into sects so irreconcilable in strictly religious matters: the Sadducees, the Scribes, the Pharisees, the Essenes. It separated the Ebionites from all other Jews who became Christians. It led Paul and Barnabas to part company in order that each might the better preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified." It caused such divisions among the apostles as to compel them to go into different sections to avoid strife.

It would be better if we could all know this truth. Then, indeed, would "the truth make us free." Does it not look as if God made it a law of our beings to differ in nonessentials in order that men should, by the mere expansion of their mental and psychic forces, be driven to separate, and thus hasten the time

when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea?"

Were the heat beneath the kettle not sufficient to cause a separating expansion of the particles of water, only that in actual contact would boil. While the heat drives them in all directions seemingly, yet in reality it is the internal condition of each particle with its degree of heat differing from the degree in its fellows which causes that separating which we call ebullition. Yet, in essentials, the water remains one, and readily reunites, whether as solid water or as snowy, fleecy vapor. May not there be a parallel in the effect in men of the indwelling of the "mind that was in Christ Jesus?"

Methodism, as it is known to the world through the Church organizations bearing the name, came by the operation of this separating force. It did not give to the world any new institute of ecclesiasticism, but it did give to all who would enjoy it an experience of a newness of life. No new doctrine did it pretend to have discovered, but it brought forth the old foundation doctrines of our holy religion, telling the world of the fresh and full, rich and reviving experience enjoyed through these old and ever new doctrines.

The very name "Methodists" was not new. A distinctive school of physicians (who flourished centuries before Wesley and his "Oxford Band" were called "Methodists" in derision of their careful, simple rules of life) took the name because they relied on curing by principles or methods, rather than by observation or experiment. It was the practice of these doctors that led a young Oxford student to cry out, when he saw how the Wesleys and their band proposed to interpret by practice the teachings of the New Testa-

ment: "Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up." The aptness of the name was recognized, and spread rapidly. But we see that not even the name was new. Nor was there any idea of erecting a new Church organization. Every one at first called "Methodist" was a member of the Church of England. Their only idea was to live as holy a life as possible and do all the good in their power "and to all men as" opportunity offered. So real Methodism was a renewing of spiritual life, a revival within the Church of England.

This great revival, which even secular historians of to-day acknowledge saved England from destruction, and made her the leading power of the world, was begun in Oxford University by John Wesley, then twenty-six years old, in 1729. He soon had associated with him, among others, his brother Charles, who really started the work, and who, with Dr. Isaac Watts, who died just as Charles Wesley began his career, was one of the greatest hymn writers of the world. The great George Whitefield was also a member of this notable band.

Thus began Methodism. Bear in mind that Wesley contemplated no more than a work "entirely religious;" had no idea beyond a revival among the students, and afterwards among the people where he labored, and all within the Established Church of England. Also that he was always a member of that Church, had received ordination to the highest orders therein by her duly constituted bishops and died a minister of that Church. This is important as showing that, were there any virtues whatever in the claim of "apostolical succession," Mr. Wesley was the recipient of all such virtues. And since he himself ordained and sent forth every Methodist preacher in his

day, who preached and baptized and ordained (except such as, like himself, had been ordained by a bishop of the established Church), and since every Methodist preacher who has ever been ordained as a Methodist was ordained in this direct "succession" from Wesley, then have we all the direct merits coming from apostolic succession, if any such there be. If the Episcopal Church has the "blessing" of apostolical succession, then had Wesley. Hence no Methodist need stand abashed before any egotist who prates loudly of the virtue of "apostolic succession." Your ordination is as secure and divinely authorized on this ground as is that of the Pope of Rome, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or any bishop in America; and your baptism is as safely apostolical as any ever administered to king, prelate, or prince. And this fact will appear important at every step after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, seven years before Mr. Wesley's death.

It is not the purpose of this volume to give a history of Methodism. Still, in order to know that there was one source whence flowed all Methodists, and that there was one original Methodist Episcopal Church in America that came from the mother shoot in England, it is necessary to know the above facts.

Mr. Wesley felt compelled to protect the preachers who went forth under his direction by a legal document, duly recorded and attested, by which all houses of worship under his control were secured to his preachers so that their right to use them could not be denied after his death; nor could doctrines be preached in them contrary to what he had taught as being plainly set forth in the Scriptures. It provided for the deeds of chapels to be vested in trustees,

members of his Conferences, and that Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament" and the first fifty-three of his published "Sermons" should constitute the standard of theology or doctrines.

This important document, called the "Deed of Declaration," and by some one denominated the "Magna Charta" of Methodism, was filed early in 1784—the year the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in America. When any one asks for authority for calling Wesley's "Notes" and the first fifty-three of his "Sermons" (of the one hundred and forty-seven published in 1771) our "Standards of Doctrines" the answer will be conclusive to all logical minds by citing the fact that Mr. Wesley recognized none as Methodists who did not recognize the named standards; that Mr. Wesley, personally, through special authority, delegated by word of mouth and explicit communication by Dr. Coke, organized the Church in America the latter part of the same year he recorded his "Deed of Declaration;" and that he planned the Church in America in every detail of essential principle, even giving it a limited episcopacy; the Church in America acknowledged in every movement and by preaching and teaching Wesley's "Sermons" and "Notes" that it was organized as a Wesley Methodist Church. So an express declaration that they believed in doing, and were determined to continue to do, and would require their preachers to do, what they were organized to do, and had always done, would have been a work of supererogation as foolish as "taking coals to Newcastle."

Wesley consented to organize a Church in America only after the revolutionary war had segregated this country, in ecclesiastical as well as in civil relations, from England.

CHAPTER II.

Two Different Policies—Agreeing in Principle but Differing in Policy—Drifting Apart.

There has been, and is still, much controversy as to whether Philip Embury, in New York (after he had been aroused by his truly pious cousin, Barbara Heck), or Robert Strawbridge, in Maryland (at Sam's Creek), was the first to plant Methodism in America. The weight of testimony, aside from the importance attaching through mere local questions and pride, appears to be in favor of Strawbridge. But there is no question of doctrine nor of polity involved. The value of the question is entirely in its chronological place in historical truth. Its settlement would explain some known historical facts in a satisfactory manner which are very difficult of explanation if one believes Philip Embury, at John Street, New York, and not Robert Strawbridge, at Sam's Creek, Maryland, the organizer of the first Methodist Society in America. The former sent out no workers as a result of his labors, as far as history tells us; while the latter sent out scores—among them Richard Owen, the first native-born American Methodist preacher. At the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church (1784) there were 14,983 members in the United States. Of these, 13,331 were in the South. In 1800 the total membership was 63,958, of which there were 45,292 in the South; in 1812, of the 195,357 in the United States, 122,561 were in the South. These facts are of importance in their bearing on the subsequent history of the Church.

Francis Asbury, whom Wesley appointed in 1772 to take charge of the work in America, was really the

forming force that set the work going. While Bishop Thomas Coke was the immediate representative of Mr. Wesley, ordained a superintendent (they were not called "bishops" until 1786) especially for the work in America, Asbury had been the nominal superintendent since five years before the revolutionary war; had labored faithfully during its seven eventful years, and was the centripetal force among his brethren, as far as any man's influence went, to hold the Church together. And it was fitting that Asbury should be the first superintendent ordained in America. His work, viewed now when its toils and its results are before the mind's eye, appears marvelous. Well has he been called the Hannibal of Methodism. Active, zealous, thoughtful for others, ever planning and extending, and untiring in new works as well as in carrying on the old, he might well be likened to the energetic and doughty Carthaginian. And like Hannibal, Asbury refused to have winter quarters, but was "in labors more abundant" while other preachers sought comfortable places, or slackened in their work during the severe winter months. Such was the man Coke ordained a bishop when the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was organized in Baltimore at the "Christmas Conference" in 1784.

Though Whitefield had bought negroes for his Orphan House plantation, and John's Street Church, New York, owned a slave, the question of abolition began to "trouble Israel" before this time. Some few members in the Northern States had, before Dr. Coke began to preach so bitterly against slavery, demanded that slave owners should be expelled. Calmer and wiser heads counseled more moderation in dealing with slavery, arguing that it was a civil in-

stitution, for which the Church was not responsible, nor could the Church in any way affect it except by making the slave's condition as pleasant as possible, and seeking to effect his freedom through the conversion of the owner; that any other course would harden the owner's heart against Christianity, and thus drive him from Christ, and leave the slaves in a worse condition. These wiser heads were opposed to slavery. All available evidence shows that every Methodist preacher in America was, from the beginning, opposed to slavery. But the majority of them believed the slaves' condition would be made worse a hundredfold, and most of them deprived of gospel privileges by taking harsh measures, in the name of Christianity, to enforce emancipation by the few who might become Methodists. As an evidence of how good and great men may differ, it is well to bear in mind that Wesley was opposed to slavery with all his mind and soul; while Whitefield, on the other hand (in 1740), had asked the trustees of the colony for "an allowance of slaves" (and the "introduction of rum") for his Orphan House plantation in Georgia; Gen. Oglethorpe, with whom Wesley went to Georgia, had forbidden slavery in his colony. Yet no one dares denounce either Wesley or Whitefield as not being real followers of Christ.

No people on earth were more opposed to slavery than were the Methodist preachers at the close of the revolutionary war, and a vast majority of them were in slaveholding territory. Of the 65 Churches in America in 1784, 56 were in the South. There were tens of thousands of slaves in the North and in New England then, and for many years afterwards. But the South was looked upon as the home of slavery,

simply because they could not be profitably employed in the North and East, and the thrifty owners in those uncongenial climes had sold them to their brethren down South. Commerce, and not Christianity, was the sole cause of its transference. It is worthy of note that the few who were honestly and religiously zealous for emancipation, *nolens volens*—and these were very few—not only found small general sympathy in the North, but met with harsh opposition and persecution up there until long after the profit in the institution had all (or mostly) gone from them. To say that the preachers who opposed slavery, and likewise opposed any measures against it, which every sane man in the world ought to know would close the hearts and doors of both slaves and owners to the gospel, were inconsistent and unchristian would certainly be to make an assertion that all candid men, acquainted with the facts, would pronounce born of a bigotry and unfairness opposed alike to history and truth and to every principle of Christianity.

The difficulty seems to have come from confusing an existing evil, found when the Church came (and which did not depend for its continued existence upon the moral point of view of its members, but upon civil and social and industrial institutions), with the personal life and example of each individual expressive of an internal, or heart condition. The proper adjustment of the latter depends upon the will and purpose of each person; on the former the individual alone could have no effect.

It is also necessary to a just comprehension of the whole truth to remember that from the South came the first protest against the slave trade and slavery as an institution. Virginia very early took strong

grounds against it, and the General Assembly sent resolutions to Congress, probably twenty times, urging a national law. These efforts were defeated by a majority representing the commercial interests of the North and East.

This was the status when the close of the revolution opened the way for Mr. Wesley to establish Methodism in America. In the Church, as in the State, two almost irreconcilable interpretations of Christian civilization were struggling for domination that which would deal with the moral aspect of questions of a civil nature in a way to make each individual's accountability therefor conditioned on his ability to change his attitude and still maintain tha obedience to civil law enjoined by Christ and th apostles; and that which would set aside all con siderations of the latter—or any other—character an deal with each individual for his personal connectior even though incidental, with all such conditions. Th opposition to this latter is what freighted the May flower with those sturdy "Pilgrims" who sought ir dividual freedom of conscience—that is, the freedo to worship God, "not for wrath, but for conscience sake." Yet, strange to say, every movement in Ame ica to compel an individual accountability for mor conditions springing from a public practice has con from these "Pilgrim Fathers," or their descendant It was the conflict of the opposing policies of t "Puritan and the Cavalier." They had not learn that the conflict lay more in the method than in t principle. But the facts stated show that an irr pressible conflict was imminent, and the student history should keep this in mind, so that later he m not become confused.

CHAPTER III.

Early Dissensions—Wesley's Attitude to Slavery—Diversity in Unity.

Our Church fathers were too busy saving souls to stop long enough to consider some dangerous inconsistencies of law they uttered at times. Neither did they take time to separate all moral questions from their surroundings, for the most part. Had this been done, there never had been a split in the greatest of the Wesleyan Churches. For it was a split, or a friendly separation, in terms of its expressed intention at least.

No just, truthful, and honest understanding of this most important history can ever be arrived at by any one who will not grasp the fact of the division, and its corollary: *There is now no "Original" or "Mother" Methodist Episcopal Church.* Bear this in mind.

Before considering the organization of the followers of Wesley into a separate and distinctive ecclesiastical organization in America, let us take notice of the beginning of the trouble that finally led the one organization to become two—both identical in every essential feature; both really one in purpose and doctrine, but with different policies, or methods, for the carrying out of the denominational enunciations.

Except in the fundamental interpretations of Christian doctrine involving what are known as Calvinism and Arminianism, there has been no question of mere theology, or exegesis that caused controversy among themselves, which Methodists have not settled without division. It has been, and is, the boast of Meth-

odism that only one instance is on record where it was proposed to arraign a member for an opinion. This fact in Methodist history, coupled with another, that all divisions, strife, or schisms have come from questions having more of a civil than a moral nature, gives ground for seeking the occasion of strife outside of a question of evil, *per se.*

The question of a modified diocesan episcopacy, and of an elective presiding eldership, and of the preacher's right to appeal from the bishop's appointment, with some others, vexed the Church for many years. And that some of the differences were very bitter is shown by the fact that many eminent men, failing to secure a declaration favoring their various contentions, went out from us. These, like comets, would drag in their train a few lesser lights who could shine only while in the glow of the real luminary. These facts are all set forth, with full details, in one or another of the standard histories of "the peculiar people called Methodists." A partial list of these is set forth in the preface to this volume, those easiest of access to the general reader.

African slavery was a question that occurred and continually recurred to trouble the Church from the very beginning. In the previous chapter it was stated that, so far as history gives us record, every Methodist preacher was opposed to slavery. But, from the beginning until the very year of separation, it had been recognized by the majority as a question requiring the exercise of special toleration in the policy of the Church in her efforts looking to its final abolishment.

As stated in the preceding chapter, Whitefield favored slavery. Wesley opposed it, and had denominated it, in 1762 or 1763, "that execrable sum of all vil-

lainies." This was about ten years before Lord Mansfield's historical decision that the mere bringing of the slave, Somerset, to England made him a free man. It was on this decision that Cowper sung:

> Slaves cannot breathe in England.
> If their lungs receive our air, that moment
> They are free. 'Tis noble. Spread it, then.

It was some years after this that a feeble boy in an English school took these lines for an essay. He afterwards followed the leading of Wesley; kindled the smoldering spark of freedom in the heart of all Christendom, and while dying, fifty years later (1883), was rejoiced by the news that his emancipation bill had passed. And thus William Wilberforce, as did John Wesley (who set him the example), gained a place in Westminster Abbey—that earthly sepulcher of the great and noble—because he "loved his fellow-men." No wonder that when those who opposed his efforts in behalf of freedom tried to frighten him from his course by telling him he was neglecting his soul's salvation he answered: "I have been so engaged with my duties I had forgotten I had a soul."

The fact of Mr. Wesley's opposition to slavery is well known. It has been conspicuously set forth in every history of Methodism coming under the eye of the writer. But in no history of the Church in America, so far as the writer has seen, has it been set forth that Mr. Wesley's written and spoken opposition (and the criticism on it above quoted) was specifically directed to the slave trade. This is a most important fact, and the failure to emphasize it seems to have been deliberate. It will be necessary to have this

fact firmly established—that of Mr. Wesley's carefully thought out purpose to confine his opposition to slavery to the destruction of the slave trade, in order to a just understanding of the truth of history. No candid, unbiased student will be satisfied with half truths, nor can a follower of Him who said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," stop with only so much of the truth, or with such a statement of it, as will serve any purpose short of a full knowledge of real conditions. Truth is the exact conformity of statement or conduct to reality.

John Wesley was always emphatic and plain of speech. On no question relating to salvation, or the privileges and duties of a Christian, excepting perhaps "sanctification," has he ever been ambiguous. In his utterances regarding slavery in its domestic relation we find him following the apostles, and urging that conduct of servant and master toward each other which would show the indwelling mind "that was in Christ Jesus." Mr. Wesley was too close and honest and critical a reader of the Scriptures to fail to know the intent and spirit of its teachings. He was too much under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to interpret into the Book a meaning conveyed merely by an isolated sentence. He sought the spirit—the life—in the Book; and that God revealed it to him is shown more and more clearly as the years go by. Every evangelical Church on earth to-day preaches in some form the essential truths of "salvation by faith" which Mr. Wesley rescued from the dirt heap of worldliness and neglect where they had been hidden so long. It would have been strange, more than wondrously strange, if such a man had taught, and professed to believe, that he found any warrant in

Scripture for the Church teaching and requiring a line of conduct that would, logically, place "the servant above his master." Mr. Wesley never taught any such doctrine. Yet, had he held that the Church ought to single out slavery as a special sin, and that all who were connected therewith, even unwillingly, were sinners above their fellow-men, and that it must be banished at any cost of Church, family, or national ties, he would have so taught. For Christ found slavery in his time to exist, even in a worse form than ever known in modern times, and nowhere does he mention or speak of its extirpation. He had, according to the views of some modern teachers who talk as if they would teach even the Great Teacher, many opportunities to teach this, but, strange to say, according to those views, he let them go by with never a word on this line. The same is true of the apostles. Mr. Wesley, and all his leading followers, believed that the principles of Christ's kingdom would ultimately drive out slavery, as they will all evil; that the Saviour, who knew the hearts of all men and "taught as one having authority," knew that when "love had done its perfect work" it would right all wrongs, even freeing the slave; and that until this spirit of love and truth were rooted in the heart, casting "out fear," and making men "free indeed," there could be no real blessings of freedom. That perseverance, persecution, and violence in a given course appear to succeed, when done in Christ's name, in bringing about the object contended for is no proof that it was done in accordance with Christ's teaching. Even "the wrath of man shall praise him;" and we have abundant evidence to prove that God does not cease in his work, nor "clog the wheels of Zion," simply because men

may occasionally become impatient at what they think is a too deliberate moving of Providence, and supplement their own efforts by attempts to do God's part and "bring things to pass." The promise is to those who will commit their "way unto the Lord. . . . Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass." The early Wesleyans held that nowhere is there a warrant in Scripture for bringing about a conflict of duties; that Christ nor the apostle never left it even probable that any Christian could ever be placed where he would have to negative a single positive duty enjoined upon every one of those belonging to the kingdom of God. And every attempt to go contrary to these teachings, which attempt St. Paul calls "a zeal not according to knowledge," has invariably resulted in pain and sorrow. It is not a sufficient answer to assert that the thing contended for was accomplished. God overrules our present follies for the good of his children in the future, and ultimately shows wherein we had been rash and disobedient, like Moses when he wrathfully smote the rock. Dr. Coke forgot this once, and got into trouble. We may see these facts connected with the question which made two Episcopal Methodist Churches in America if we will look at the truth as it is, and not as we have believed it, or would wish it.

It is more than begging the question to cry: "Slavery is dead, and this is a dead issue, of no value now." That is exactly the danger. Men attempt to cover up one error or hide the truth by another cloak of error or mantle of falsehood. No issue is ever dead until the source of its evil has been discovered so that its stream may be cut off. The evil of slavery was the cause of the great separation of Methodists, and the

breach can never be filled except by truth and love. So we must go to the beginning and follow the meanderings of the stream to find where the bitter waters flowed in before we can sweeten them.

The statement may be reiterated then: Wesley regarded the slave trade as abhorrent, the "execrable sum of all villainies;" that no Christian would tolerate or excuse it, nor could one be connected with it. But he referred to the practice of ensnaring them for the purpose of enslaving them, and *not* to the institution formed in many civilized lands. This latter he unquestionably regarded as a condition to be dealt with as Christ and the apostles dealt and taught, with a view to bettering and lightening the condition and bondage of the slave by Christianizing him, and by making the master a Christian, and thus more merciful. And Mr. Wesley believed the Saviour's life and teachings indicated that it was in this manner the kingdom of God was to come. Mr. Wesley also believed that Christ and the apostles plainly taught that followers of Christ must obey the laws of the countries where they lived. But for the Church to make radical laws against any institution sanctioned and protected by civil laws would certainly be against the explicit teachings of Scripture. Hence, as might be expected, so good and earnest a Bible scholar as was Mr. Wesley (and so fearless) never committed the inconsistency of advising, urging, or teaching his followers a course that would lead to a practice in conflict with that taught and practiced by Christ and his apostles.

The case of Nathaniel Gilbert is an instance showing Mr. Wesley's scriptural attitude to slavery. Mr. Gilbert was a wealthy planter of the West Indies.

He visited England, read some of Mr. Wesley's publications, and sought a personal acquaintance with the great preacher. The result was Mr. Gilbert's conversion, and he became a lay (local) preacher. This was about 1760. Mr. Wesley's journal contains this most significant entry: "In the morning I preached in Mr. Gilbert's house. Two negro servants of his *and a mulatto* [italics not his] appear to be much awakened. Shall not His saving health be made known to all nations?" Mr. Wesley followed up this work, as is shown by this entry in his journal shortly afterwards: "I rode to Wandsworth, and baptized two negroes belonging to Mr. Gilbert, a gentleman lately come from Antigua. One of these is deeply convinced of sin; the other rejoices in God her Saviour, and is the first African Christian I have known. But shall not our Lord, in due time, have these heathen also for his inheritance?"

Here was a great chance for Mr. Wesley, as was offered to our Saviour and to the apostles, to inveigh against the owner of slaves, and deny them membership in the Church unless the slaves were liberated. It cannot be charged that Mr. Wesley took the course he did through ignorance of the teaching and spirit of the Scriptures. No man of his day knew the Book so well as he. And all efforts since to find that he had misinterpreted Scripture has only served to show that not since apostolic days has any one so thoroughly and deeply given to men its true spiritual and practical meaning. No man since Wesley has been able to approach him in exegesis. All recent discoveries in archæology serve but to strengthen Mr. Wesley's interpretation in its main significance along the trend of its bearing on individual and national con-

duct. And a critical comparison of the Revised (1881) New Testament with Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament" will reveal that the latter was the model for the former. It was because Mr. Wesley did understand the genius and spirit of Christianity that he did not urge the indiscriminate liberation of slaves held in Christian lands, but opposed the slave trade. He believed that to stop the further enslavement of men and women, and to bring under the power of the gospel those already held, as well as their owners, would be the only method by which the kingdom of God could encompass all men by the conquest of peace and love. This was why Mr. Wesley made no rule on slavery for the Church in America, nor urged any. Had he even had the slightest doubt as to the teachings of God's Word on the subject, holding the views he did as to the slave trade, he would have urged and insisted on emancipation as a requirement of Church membership as hotly as did some of his followers in America, from 1780, on and until they had seen the results of their course in the appalling waste of treasure and blood, and the division and heartburning of earnest, sincere Christians.

So while there was creeping into Methodism that great diversity that must inevitably lead to separations in polity, theirs was a unity in spirit, in purpose. It was that diversity which is the strongest proof of true unity, as the bright sunlight is the unity of its diverse primary colors. Better had it been for the world and for Christian brotherhood had Mr. Wesley's followers in strictly theological teachings followed him in his Christlike attitude toward "the powers that be," which he believed, with St. Paul, "are ordered of God." How any one could have read Mr. Wesley's notes on

Romans xiii. 1-7, 1 Peter ii. 14, Ephesians vi. 5, Colossians iii. 22 and iv. 1, 1 Timothy vi. 1, and Titus ii. 9, and believed that either the Scripture or Mr. Wesley taught anything to justify radical action on this question, passes understanding. That some did so believe only goes to prove how great may be the differences of men in the way they strive to accomplish the purpose of God when their hearts are filled with a holy zeal. But this very fact ought to make us think and act kindly toward each other, even in differences. This is the teaching of God, urging us to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," of love. Well for those who would know the whole truth and who desire and hope for a union of all who have the "same faith and practice," if they keep all these facts in mind.

CHAPTER IV.

First Law on Slavery—Sweeping Rule of 1784—Its Speedy Repeal—Modified and Becomes a Rule.

Such were the conditions of the times, and such the attitude of Mr. Wesley and his leading followers to the institution of slavery at the time the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized.

From the work of Strawbridge and Capt. Webb and Embury, and under the leadership of that marvelous man who took America for his circuit and diocese, Francis Asbury, the Methodists became a host in a few years. But differences began to disturb them before they were organized into a settled, compact, distinct Church. In 1780 the Conference, which was modeled after those in England under Mr. Wesley, took action on slavery. The exact language and occasion are important. It is the first utterance of the kind in Wesleyan Methodism, and becomes historical, being the wedge, just inserted in the growing tree, which split the trunk within sixty-four years.

The eighth Conference (they had been at first but annual conventions in character) was held in Baltimore, Mr. Asbury, as Mr. Wesley's acknowledged representative, presiding. It met April 24, 1780. The rules of Methodism in those days (the Discipline) were the answers to questions recorded in the minutes as they were put and voted on. The answers, for convenience of reference, were numbered. There were twenty-six such questions in the minutes of this Conference. Here are the questions on slavery:

"Ques. 16. Ought not this Conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves to promise to set them free?

"Ans. Yes.

"Ques. 17. Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves *and advise* their freedom?

"Ans. Yes."

On this Mr. Jesse Lee, the first historian of Methodism, who planted Methodism in New England, and was also a pioneer preacher in the South, and knew the people and times, objected to this minute. He was second to no man in his zeal for the salvation of all men, and loved our Zion, and was ever jealous for her purity and Christlikeness. And of this minute he writes: "It was going too far, and calculated to irritate the minds of our people, and not to convince them of their errors."

The eleventh Conference met at Ellis's Preaching House, in Virginia, on May 6, 1783, and adjourned to Baltimore, and reassembled May 24. Eighty-two preachers met and reported 13,740 members, nine-tenths of whom lived in the South. The rule, or minute, respecting slavery passed by the eighth Conference, given above, had been dropped, evidently, as it does not appear in the intervening minutes. The question again comes up at this session, as follows:

"Ques. What shall be done with our local preachers who own slaves *contrary to the laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States?*

"Ans. We will try them another year. In the meantime let every assistant (the preacher in charge) deal faithfully and plainly with every one, and report to the next Conference. *It may be necessary to suspend them.*"

A wonderful modification of the rule adopted in Baltimore in 1780. That first rule, though, was like the boom of a gun inaugurating a war whose cannon roars should encircle the globe with the deep-toned thunders of their awful destruction. The seemingly mild recurrence of the dreaded question in 1783 was but the camel's head in the tent, that, once in, the body followed. Those who were impatient of Christ's method of letting his doctrine and spirit work as a leaven, and unwilling to teach as did he and his inspired apostles, seemed determined to force the issue. They were good men; they were earnest. But they were so dominated by their zeal that they could not see that the doom of slavery was written in the very fact of the spread of the truth of Christ's kingdom. They could not see that the revival fires Methodism was enkindling in the hearts of Americans would as surely consume and destroy the evil of slavery as disappears the cesspool when the surrounding rubbish is burned away to let sunlight and pure air upon it.

In 1784 came the permanent organization. Amid protests but faintly uttered Dr. Coke's hand appears. His zeal kept him from rising to the lofty heights whence he could view the large things God had stretched out for his faithful children. It is given only to calm, deep, patient toilers in God's narrow highway to climb the Pisgah heights and see beyond the Jordan of "hardness" the promised land of gospel achievement. To the top of these heights Dr. Coke did not ascend. Seconded by his fiery, impatient zeal,

it is small wonder that the following rule was enacted in 1784, when American Methodism was organized. The Conference that met previously to (May, 1784) the Christmas Conference had passed a rule that was designed, if carried out, to extirpate slavery. But its unrepealed effect would have been to likewise obliterate Methodism from the land where it most flourished, and where it struck its roots deepest, and where it has always been the strongest, and whence it was to spread over the vast wilderness which it was to be the chief factor in redeeming to our Lord. This rule made easy the way for those radically inclined, aided by the powerful Dr. Coke, to enact the rules on slavery at the Christmas Conference. As these are given in full in only two histories coming to the notice of the writer, and as they became momentous in making history, they deserve to be read in full, and are here given:

"Ques. 42. What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?

"Ans. We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established [*sic*] excepting on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets, and the inalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

"We, therefore, think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate

this abomination from among us. And for that purpose we add [*sic*] to the rules of our Society, viz.:

"III. Every member of our Society who has slaves in his possession shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant (preacher in charge), which notice the assistants are required immediately and without any delay to give in their respective circuits, legally execute and record an instrument whereby he emancipates and sets free any slave in his possession who is between the ages of forty and forty-five, immediately or, at farthest, when they arrive at the age of forty-five; and every slave who is between the ages of twenty-five and forty, immediately or, at farthest, at the expiration of five years from the date of said instrument; and every slave who is between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, immediately or, at farthest, when they arrive at the age of thirty; and every slave under the age of twenty as they arrive at the age of twenty-five at farthest; and every infant born in slavery after the above-mentioned rules are complied with, immediately on its birth.

"2. Every assistant shall keep a journal in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all masters in his respective circuit, and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book, and folio in which the said instruments respectively shall have been recorded; which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistant.

"3. In consideration that these rules form a new Term of Communion, every person concerned who will not comply with them shall have liberty quietly

to withdraw himself from our Society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid. Otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the Society.

"4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the Supper of the Lord with the Methodists till he complies with the above requisitions.

"5. No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into Society or the Lord's Supper till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery. Those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away, except for the purpose of freeing them, shall be expelled immediately.

"N. B.—These rules are to affect the members of our Society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the States in which they reside. And, respecting our brethren in Virginia who are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given to consider the expedience of compliance or noncompliance with these rules."

The exceptions and limitations contained in the above rules are more amazing than the rules themselves, and show beyond reasonable controversy that there existed admitted circumstances under which no ecclesiastical rule could be enforced, or even partially become operative, regarding slavery. This was clearly seen, even by those who took this radical view, within six months after their adoption; the counsel of more conservative, calmer heads prevailed, and the rules were suspended. Dr. Coke himself recognized the moral wrong of enforcing, or even agitating, the rules alike everywhere. So in North

Carolina he refrained from any public utterance on the subject. He expressed the reason thus: "The laws of the State forbidding any to free their negroes."

The rules above given were suspended at the Conference in June, 1785. This Conference was held in Baltimore and authorized the assistants "to suspend the execution of the minute on slavery till the deliberations of a future Conference; and that an equal space of time be allowed all our members for consideration, when the minute shall be put in force." But to this was added the following: "We hold in deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means."

It is not irrelevant to pause here to remark that Methodism declared in favor of emancipation three years before Massachusetts ordered their liberation, four years in advance of emancipation in Connecticut and Rhode Island, sixteen years before the slave owned by John Street Methodist Church, New York, received his freedom papers. Of this more particularly in a succeeding chapter.

After 1785 the subject does not appear again for some time, except to urge, in the minutes for 1787, that untiring efforts be made for the salvation of the slaves in each circuit, and a brotherly oversight to be exercised over them.

The "vexed question" again appears in 1789. This time it is first introduced into the Discipline. It is in the General Rules among the things a person will not do if he desires to "flee from the wrath to come," and reads: "The buying or selling the bodies and souls (an old Roman form) of men, women, or

children, with an intention to enslave them." (In 1792 the words "bodies and souls" were eliminated, and never again used.)

How or by whom the rule came into the Discipline is not known. It has been the subject of much speculation. The weight of probability points to the bishops as the authors (and more probably to Dr. Coke), as they were about to publish for the first time the General Rules in the Discipline. This seems more probably the origin, in the absence of any record of its history, from the fact that "the general government had taken action on the subject generally," and the bishops seem to have thought it expedient, in view of the several expressions of the Church on the question, that the Discipline should not go abroad without anything at all bearing on the subject. They "therefore added this rule, which the next General Conference, of 1792, slightly modified and retained." It certainly was more generally approved and longer retained than any other ever enacted by the Church on this subject. And it appears from the whole, and not simply a part, of the history of the subject that this rule was directed at the slave trade, and not to the transferring of slaves from one owner to another. The word "enslaved" shows this, since you could not "enslave" one already in slavery by buying and selling. And Jesse Lee, our first historian, writing from personal knowledge and as a participant, himself opposed to slavery, specifically tells us this was the meaning of the Rule. And by every rule of logic the same decision will be reached where every fact is considered and the entire subject gone over by any one seeking "the whole truth."

Thus the "vexed question" stood when the "law

and the testimony," the rule that stood until the Church was forced to the division on the plea of expediency in 1844, was enacted, and which Rule stood in the Discipline of both branches until the "occasion of offense" was removed as a question of war, and not through moral suasion nor religious conviction.

CHAPTER V.

South Leads for Full Emancipation—The Chasm Is Being Bridged by Love and Truth—What Has Kept Us Apart—The True Status.

Thus was a vacillating course pursued. Trumpet-voiced and not uncertain was the sound the Church gave out regarding its stand against the nefarious enslavement of men and women, that "execrable sum of all villainies." And not clearer on the balmy air of a Southern June morning are the chimes of silver-toned bells than were the expressed purpose of every Methodist preacher to work and pray and hope for the emancipation of those already in slavery.

In expressing this determination the South had been in advance of the North, both in time and in force of expression. In 1800, at the Fourth General Conference, William McKendree, who was a Virginian, and became our fourth bishop, moved that "this General Conference direct the yearly Conferences to appoint a committee to draw proper addresses to the State Legislatures from year to year petitioning gradual emancipation." A motion of "Brother Ormond, of North Carolina," the laws of which State had suggested to Dr. Coke the duty of letting emancipation alone, "that no slaveholder henceforth could join the Methodist Church," was voted down; but any traveling preacher who failed to record a deed of emancipation to any slave in his possession, "if practicable," was, by a resolution adopted, "to lose his ministerial character, unless emancipation was forbidden by the laws of the State where they live." Mark these exceptions. They were Methodistic, Wesleyan, scrip-

tural, apostolic. The skies would to-day arch above a united Episcopal Methodism had this course prevailed. And there is little question but that Methodism, united in all things according to the plain teachings and ways of Him who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," would have brought about in America the emancipation of the slaves through the power of the gospel as soon, or nearly so, as was done by the wrath of man as a confessed and avowed retaliatory war measure. And this "vexed question" would then not have been the unnecessary cause of a million souls ascending through the battle's smoke to stand before God; and of the enormous waste of treasure, the devastation of an empire, the desolation of happy homes, the sowing of strife and hatred where there should have been peace and love. There would not then have been dug that great chasm of division, on either side of which for a generation brethren stood and threatened and opposed and hated (because they would not understand) each other. And not yet is the bridge spanning that dark chasm. There is yet no way by which we may cross and be again united. But there lacks only one pillar that the span might be thrown over. It is the pillar of Truth. That once in place, the strong, solid span of Love will bridge the gulf, and there will be no more strife, because no more misunderstanding. We will be brethren and "dwell together in unity." God speed this bridge-building!

Another significant event occurred at this General Conference (1800) in Baltimore. For the first time the bishops were allowed to admit colored preachers to deacon's orders, under certain limitations and restrictions. It was never inserted in the Discipline.

The first colored deacon ordained under this provision led the first secession of colored people out of the Church in 1816. It was Richard Allen, and he became the first bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

That the conservative element of the Church, who prevented the extreme politico-religious radical dealing with slavery, were regarded as in the right by the wisest and the best men from all sections is shown by every utterance of those who lived in the times, and heard and knew of the efforts and purposes of both sides. Think of Jesse Lee pleading with his father to free his slaves! More than twenty times Virginia pleaded with the North and East to put aside the question of the enormous profits of the slave trade and unite with the South to stop the traffic. But she and the South pleaded in vain. The interests of the shipowners and commerce in New England and the North must be protected. There was an enormous profit in the business. So, long after the working of slaves in the North and East had proven profitless, and their thrifty owners up there had transported and sold them to their brethren in the more congenial clime of the South, thereby making a double profit, the shipowners and the merchants in New England and in the North kept up the traffic. Thus the institution was really transferred to the South and kept there by the North, the latter pocketing and retaining the commercial profits, leaving the institution fastened as a national civil perpetuity on the South. This is the absolute, entire truth of the matter, and its suppression or elimination in history has served only to dig yet deeper the separating chasm.

Where is the justice in the attempt to fasten odium

on the South as if her people were the chief and only sinners? Does teaching a falsehood to our children in the name of Christianity and in behalf of a truly Christian cause make it any nearer truth? Will any one contend that it is not a betrayal of every principle of that truth which Christ taught would make us free, to fail to counteract a false impression and set forth the real truth when we find that a falsehood, or even a false impression, is going abroad in the name or through the influence of a Church we boast of as being apostolical and "of Christ?"

Yet to fail to use the whole power of such a Church to stop the spread of an impression that unjustly puts one brother in the wrong above another, when that impression gains currency in the name of a Church, makes that Church as much responsible, morally, for the wrong done as is the counterfeiter who passes debased money, or as he who remains silent when appealed to as to its purity by him who passes it. So, if either branch of American Episcopal Methodism has been guilty under this head, either by circulating an unjust, injuring impression against the other; or has arrogantly assumed to itself any claim of superiority not in accordance with the exact and unequivocal facts, to the corresponding belittlement of the other; or has remained silent in its authoritative utterances while these things have been done in its name; or has assumed (or permitted the assumption in its name unrebuked) any position in Christian life more Christlike than its sister and coequal branch, to the depression of the latter in the esteem of honorable men—then is such branch unquestionably guilty. It can purge itself only by speedily making every reparation possible, and by declaring "the whole truth,

and nothing but the truth." For posterity, removed from the personal feelings and prejudices that committed and perpetrated the wrongs, will have the truth. Vindication will be none the less sure because delayed. In Church, as in State, the sublime words of the fallen Cardinal Wolsey will apply:

> Love thyself last; cherish those hearts that hate thee.
> Corruption wins not more than honesty.
> Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace.
> To silence envious tongues be just and fear not.
> Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, thy God's, and truth's.

The conservative members of the Conferences, those who opposed slavery equally with their few brethren who wanted to compel members of the Church to do what the civil laws of the States where very many of them lived forbade under heavy penalties, were in favor of Christianizing both the slave and his owner, leaving the Holy Spirit to "teach them all truth." Those who demanded radical measures were in the minority, as we shall see, until 1844. It was the purpose of the conservatives to bring about emancipation through the moral sentiment of the gospel of Jesus Christ. England freed her slaves—as they had been introduced in her colonies by authority—by purchase, paying over $100,000,000 for them. We have seen that Wesley had been a pioneer in this movement, probably giving Wilberforce his greatest inspiration in the work. Had England's action come before the revolution, there had been no contest nor quarrel over slavery in America, as England would have compelled New England and the North to cease the enslaving and enforced transportation, and paid the owners, as she did elsewhere, for those found here,

except those who emancipated them freely, "for conscience's sake," as thousands in the South stood ready to do whenever they could do so without becoming criminal under the law. (We find no mention then of emancipation "without money or price" in the North.)

That their refusing to become criminals under civil law did not make them stand condemned before God, in the estimation of our wisest and greatest "fathers in Israel," is shown by the makers and writers of our history and the builders of our Zion.

In 1804 the General Conference exempted from even the qualified Rules on slavery "the members of our Societies in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee." And on the last day of the next General Conference (1808) this most remarkable action was taken, as recorded in the journal: "Moved from the chair, that there be 1,000 Forms of Discipline prepared for the use of the South Carolina Conference, in which the section and rule on slavery be left out. Carried." As there were only two Superintendents, Bishops Asbury and McKendree, it is almost a certainty that Bishop Asbury was the author of this motion. As if to make this sure, we find the senior bishop, a pronounced, deep-convictioned antislavery man, writing in his journal a little over eight months afterwards (February 1, 1809) this most significant utterance as his matured conviction: "We are defrauded of great numbers by the pains taken to keep the blacks from us; their masters are afraid of the influence of our principles. Would not an amelioration in the condition and treatment of slaves have produced more practical good to the poor Africans than any attempt at their emancipa-

tion? The state of society, unhappily, does not admit of this; besides, the blacks are deprived of the means of instruction. Who will take the pains to lead them into the way of salvation, and watch over them that they may not stray, but the Methodists? Well; now their masters will not let them come to hear us, what is the personal liberty of the African, which he may abuse (how prophetic of the dreadful years of 1865 to 1885!), to the salvation of his soul, how may it be compared?"

And Dr. Nathan Bangs, a New Englander, always antislavery, conscientious in his words and acts, the historian of the Church, wrote in 1838:

"Though those who framed them (the Rules on Slavery) abhorred the practice of slavery, they could not have considered it such a sin as to exclude a man from the 'kingdom of grace and glory;' nor did they, as some seem to have supposed, insist on *immediate* and *unconditional* (italics his) emancipation; for even the rule itself, had it not been suspended, provided only for *gradual* emancipation. But finding that even this gradual process could not be carried forward without producing *a greater evil than it was designed to remove* (italics not his), the rule itself, mild and forbearing as it was in comparison to measures recently proposed, was suspended at the succeeding Conference (June, 1785) in favor of those more *wise* and *prudent means which the Church has ever since used, and is now ready to use, for the extirpation of slavery.*" (Italics are the writer's as showing the true spirit of Methodism right down to the time of separation, as believed and taught by those who were the guardians and custodians of her citadel, as well as the builders of her walls.)

Thus every action and authoritative utterance on the subject by or for the Church had recognized the right of members and officers to all the privileges of the Church, in spite of slavery, where it was unlawful to free a slave. The rule of 1816 made it illegal for slaveholders to hold "any official station in the Church where the laws of the State in which they live will admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." This legal and scriptural exception was always made and recognized after the first radical action on the subject. It was fully recognized by express declarations in the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840. (The Southern Church did not omit or change it!)

The leadings of the Holy Spirit may be seen in the sweeping revivals that were general when this question rested where it seemed plain that Scripture placed it, and the lack of such revivals when the matter was agitated.

CHAPTER VI.

The Calm before the Storm—Law on Slavery More Clearly Defined in 1836-40.

"Then had the churches rest, . . . and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

This exactly describes the state and condition of Methodism in the United States after the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840, especially the latter. Enactments and resolutions on slavery reassured all that no political measures would ever be adopted to disturb the "peace of Zion."

The subject was brought squarely before the Conference in a memorial from the officials of the Westmoreland, Va., Church, which was within the Baltimore Conference. The memorial set forth the complaint that while they were subject to State laws forbidding emancipation, the Baltimore Conference had refused to elect local preachers to elder's orders or to admit them to the traveling connection, because they owned slaves. In reply to this, and to make plain the letter and spirit of the law of the Church, a resolution was passed declaring that "the general rule of the Church on slavery does not operate against, nor constitute a legal barrier to, the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the Methodist Episcopal Church, where the laws of the States or Territories do not admit of emancipation or prevent the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." And, to yet stronger emphasize this law, and make sure the purpose and mind of the Church, the reply to the Wesleyan Methodist Church (in England) was

more to the point, and forever settles the question as to the attitude of the Church. It had been the habit of the English Wesleyans, as a mother to her child, to proffer advice to the American Church on this troublesome subject. The reply to this advice, in 1840, was so explicit that, so far as the writer can find, no other such advice was ever offered. The General Conference explained to the Wesleyans that in America each State was as sovereign and independent regarding laws regulating its own domestic affairs "as if there existed no federation among them for ends of common interest, and therefore it is impossible to frame a rule on slavery proper for our people in all the States alike." (In view of the action taken four years later, and the politico-religious teachings of one part of this same Church for fifty years thereafter on this momentous question of "State sovereignty," this utterance becomes of vast historical importance and significance.) This reply to the Wesleyans, which was adopted by the General Conference and signed by all the bishops, also contained this clause:

"We assure you, brethren, that we have adopted *no new principle or rule of discipline respecting* slavery since the time of our apostolic Asbury, *neither do we mean to adopt any.* We should regard it a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of 'spreading scriptural holiness over these lands to questions of temporal import involving the rights of Cæsar."

It is but the truth of history to state that the members and ministry of the Church in slaveholding States believed in the honesty and integrity of her declared purpose, and trusted in the sacredness of the law. So they addressed themselves strictly to the spiritual affairs of the Church, paying little or no attention to the few who made politics the chief factor.

This was why the action of 1844 came as a surprise as unexpected as would a rock-splintering lightning flash from a clear sky.

To more clearly appreciate the force of this surprise, it is well to bear in mind that abolition, as a movement within the Church, was considered dead. Even its most radical friends so regarded it. The words of the great Richard Watson to the Wesleyan preachers in the West Indies in 1833 on this subject had been adopted by the Church. A memorial had passed the New England Conference asking for a change of Discipline, making nonslaveholding a condition of membership, and had been sent to the other Conferences. "In the Genesee Conference thirty voted for it and sixty against it. The Pittsburg Conference gave five votes for it. All the other Conferences outside of New England gave less votes than these two, and in most cases none at all. The Michigan Conference gave one vote for it, and the Erie Conference gave three. The North Carolina, Philadelphia, Missouri, Indiana, New Jersey, Troy, Black River, Illinois, Kentucky, Georgia, Baltimore, Virginia, and others, were unanimous for nonconcurrence, or reported no votes in favor of it." (Matlock's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph.") Rev. D. D. Wheadon, D.D., in his "Introduction" to Dr. Matlock's "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph" (1881) (both writers were Northern and Eastern men, eminent in the Northern branch of the Church, and, consequently, unbiased in this view), said:

"It is of the first importance for us fully to realize that the abolition movement was, in fact, an utter moral failure. It is a signal, popular illusion that original abolitionism was a great successful moral reform. This error is propagated with much magnilo-

quence by Mr. Garrison's latest biographer. You would think, from the ordinary story, that slavery was abolished by moral suasion, and that essentially by the Garrisonian programme. Quite the reverse. All Mr. Garrison did was to madden the slaveholders, and bring on a war. The war might have created a slave empire, and have perpetuated the system forever. The abolition was not a moral achievement, but a war measure."

Though this was written in 1881, it was concerning the questions of 1836 to 1844, and, as to that, of 1861-65. The Philadelphia Conference had a standing question from 1837 on for several years to candidates for admission: "Are you an abolitionist?" An affirmative answer insured their rejection. Hence, after the General Conference of 1840 had spoken so clearly, the abolitionists were discouraged—they considered their cause dead within the Church, and prepared to secede, since it was clear that the Church proposed to maintain the Discipline as it was.

So, in 1842, Revs. Orange Scott, Horton, Sunderland, Matlock (author of "Antislavery Struggle and Triumph"), and others, seceded, and organized the Wesleyan Methodist Church. After this secession (which transferred the politico-religious question for the time to New England and Central New York, the Wesleyans making nonslaveholding a condition of membership, and even an *opinion* that slaveholding might be right a ban) there was a period of great peace and prosperity. Sweeping revivals prevailed everywhere in the Church, and the increase in membership was far in advance of any ever known, rising from an increase of 57,473 in 1841 to 154,624 in 1843, and 102,831 in 1844. The total increase during the four years to 1844 was more than 375,000!

The success of the abolition movement was transferred to a political party outside the Church. This party, headed by Birney, Lundy, Tappan, and William Lloyd Garrison, spurned alike the Constitution and the Bible, and denounced the Methodists. That they had the open encouragement and aid of some Methodist preachers, in spite of this course, serves alike to show the nature of the movement and the sentiments that were to prevail in forcing into two separate organizations the strongest Protestant Church in the world.

As tending to throw light upon this "irrepressible conflict," and at the same time exhibit one of those curious inconsistencies that seem inseparable from weak human nature, the following "recovered" incident in "Lost Chapters of American Methodist History" is given. It shows that, at the time our earnest brethren in the North and East wanted to compel Southern slave owners to free their slaves "without money and without price," old John Street Church, in New York, as an organization, owned a negro, and compelled him to work for them and pay for his own emancipation, even taking his watch as part pay. The fact may be found detailed in "Lost Chapters Recovered from the Early History of American Methodism," pages 450 to 467. This work is by Rev. J. B. Wakely, D.D., of the New York Conference, and may therefore be regarded as reliable and entirely impartial by all Methodists. Dr. Wakely "recovered" the original official record book of Philip Embury's Chapel, and peered into it to see if it contained some "lost chapters." He found that it did, and one especially which many are sorry he "recovered." The record shows that one of the converts of Capt. Webb, in his old "Rigging Loft Meetings," in 1778, was a black negro named Peter Williams. Peter was

owned by an Englishman named Aymar. Aymar, being a "loyalist," fled at the close of the revolutionary war. Peter was made sexton of the church (probably hired from his owner) in 1778. He was subsequently purchased by the enterprising Church officials from his owner, who, of course, could not take Peter to England without his becoming free. One would have a right to expect the John Street brethren to urge Aymar to take Peter along and free him, or that they purchased him in order to free him. (This is what they wanted to urge on the brethren in the South; then later demanding that Bishop Andrew move North and free slaves *thrust* on him.) But not so. The entries in the old "record book" of the Church (hastily and enthusiastically called by some the "Cradle of American Methodism") is as follows, given by Dr. Wakely: "June 10, 1783.—Paid Mr. Aymar for his negro, Peter, £40." Then Peter is permitted to exemplify the beauties of emancipation by paying for his own freedom, the first entry being a credit for his watch, valued at £5. Smaller amounts are credited at various dates, until this closes the matter, and proclaims the idea and practice of emancipation as it then obtained in the North: "November 4, 1785.—By cash received of Peter Williams, in full for all demands, £5, 7, 0." "The bill of sale is very businesslike," says Bishop McTyeire; "but it does not appear that Peter got his free papers until October 20, 1796." Thrifty people were our fathers of old John Street Church.

This scrap of history serves well in explanation of the fact that the Northern branch of Episcopal Methodism (sixty-nine years later) waited until two years after President Lincoln, as a war measure, declared all slaves in the United States free, before it enacted

a nonslaveholding clause in the Discipline as a condition of membership. Yet it was that very question which had forced a united Church to declare itself to be two organizations twenty years before, the Northern brethren insisting that they could not work harmoniously with their Southern brethren because the latter did not favor a nonslaveholding rule.

It is only perhaps just now that the temper and disposition of all American Methodists are ready to know and to accept the whole truth.

CHAPTER VII.

General Conference of 1844—The Harding Case.

Those who believed that the declaratory, mandatory, and statutory actions of the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840 concerning slavery were made in good faith and expressed the honest sentiments of a Christian Church felt secure under the laws thereby enacted and construed. As we have seen, the Church generally felt secure, and her ministers and members addressed themselves to their high calling—preaching the gospel and seeking the salvation of souls. This security from any more trouble on the subject of slavery was felt until a short time before the General Conference of 1844. Faith in the integrity of the Church and the sacred observance of her own laws by her ministers and members led to the belief that no trouble could be possible; and harmony was anticipated, especially as far as the vexed subjects of slavery and abolitionism were concerned. But as the time drew near for the assembling of the Conference signs of a gathering storm began to be seen on the horizon. Here and there in the Northern and Eastern skies appeared darkly fringed clouds; and from these quarters the deep rumble of distant thunders could be heard. The petitions passed by some Annual Conferences, and the tone of many Church papers, were ominous of coming trouble.

Soon the name of Bishop James Osgood Andrew, one of the bishops of the Church, was mentioned in a way to create uneasiness. It had become noised abroad that the Bishop had, in some way, become personally connected with slavery. The fact that the

fathers (if not the abolitionists themselves) had probably sold—not emancipated—these slaves to their Southern brethren cut no figure with them. Civil institutions and statutes, nor expressed laws of the Church, were of no weight with them. In their determination to carry their point all of these were kept in the background as of no consequence, and those who pleaded them were denounced as antichrist.

So wise heads saw the quickly forming storm, but never dreamed what a tornado was coming. The plans, hopes, and even schemes of politicians, had been retransplanted from the arena of partisan politics to the chief council chamber of a great Church.

The General Conference assembled in New York, May 5, 1844. Apparently there was no cause for alarm. The surface was calm, but beneath was a caldron; a trembling of the ground on which the delegates stood portended an earthquake—that a cataclysm was threatened which would leave a divided Church on opposite sides of a bridgeless chasm.

On May 7, as soon as organization was completed, a petition was presented from the New Hampshire Conference on the slavery question, ostensibly objecting to Dr. Capers as one of the Missionary Secretaries because he was a slaveholder. The language in which this was expressed was regarded by many as disrespectful to the General Conference. This, with the excitable nature of the subject, started the long and bitter struggle. The petition was finally referred to a committee raised on that general subject. It was manifest to the observant members that this action was not the real object; and this lack of open, direct, and frank action was just cause for alarm. On May 9 a resolution was adopted instructing the commit-

tee on slavery to report *directly* and *explicitly* on the points referred, and *as speedily* as *possible.* Thus the reader can readily see that this action was simply preliminary to another one intended, and which its movers wished to hasten.

Impatience could not long be curbed. On the following day (May 10) the subject was presented in a light which more clearly revealed the purpose in view. It may be said to have lifted the curtain and shown what was behind. This was on the "Harding case," and every utterance and action, as plainly shown from the unusually full details set forth in the journal, reveal that all was done with another and larger object in view, and that this latter and not the former had been the predetermined objective action of the chief movers.

Rev. Francis A. Harding, in February, 1844, had married a lady who owned five slaves. In March the Baltimore Conference, to which he belonged, took action by referring the case to a special committee. The report of this committee, and the action of the Conference thereon, are of sufficient importance for extended notice. They made history. They were, really, simply the prelude, and were so intended, to the future and more momentous action that divided the Church.

The committee reported that Mr. Harding had become possessed of five slaves, giving names and ages of each, and recommended the following preamble and resolution for adoption:

"Whereas the Baltimore Conference cannot, and will not, tolerate slavery in any of its members;

"*Resolved*, That Brother Harding be required to execute a deed of manumission, and have the same en-

rolled in the proper court, and give to this Conference during this present session a pledge that this shall be done during the present year."

The Conference minutes contain this further record of the case:

"Brother Harding having stated the impossibility, with his views, of complying with this resolution, Mr. Collins (Rev. John A. Collins, who afterwards represented his Conference in the case in the General Conference) moved for his suspension until he gave sufficient assurance of his compliance.

"The matter was again referred to a committee of five for further investigation, who reported that they had entirely failed to induce Brother Harding to comply with the wishes of the Conference.

"Brothers Collins and Emory moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That Brother Harding be suspended until the next Annual Conference, or until he assures the episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to free his slaves."

Mr. Harding had shown that by the laws of Maryland he could not free a slave; and, if he wished to emancipate such and send them to a State where they could enjoy freedom, he could not do so in this case, since they were his wife's, were hers before he married her, and the law expressly forbade a husband exercising any control over his wife's slaves, or to any benefit of them except their labor while he lives; the law even forbidding the wife and husband jointly to manumit such slaves. Verification of these facts were presented to the Conference over the signatures of Justice William D. Merrick, of the State Supreme Court, and Judge Edmund Key, of the District Court.

This authority was presented as showing that the law in the Discipline, under which Mr. Harding was charged, was not violated, since the Discipline explicitly excepted ministers living in States so prohibiting manumission.

Notwithstanding this plain and just appeal to the language and spirit of the Discipline, the Conference passed the resolution of suspension. Mr. Harding appealed to the General Conference. It was the motion to reverse the decision of the Baltimore Conference that brought the matter before the General Conference.

The same pleadings and arguments in favor of standing by "the law and the testimony" presented to the Baltimore Conference in behalf of Mr. Harding were presented to the General Conference.

Some startling doctrines and strange remarks were offered and made by Mr. Collins, who represented the Baltimore Conference, and the majority accepted his view. He said: "The law of 1843 [the Maryland State law] is a strange law. It . . . is against the law of God, for that makes man the head of his wife, and this law takes from him the position assigned him by the Supreme Being. I am satisfied that this law will work such evil that . . . it will have to be repealed. I hope, therefore, that you will not judge us by this law. We cannot answer for all the tergiversations of the laws of Maryland, and cannot conform to all their changes. As they have gone so far as to pass a law deposing man from his rightful place in the domestic economy [he means the law preventing a husband from having absolute control of property personally belonging to his wife independently of her marriage], a place assigned to him from the beginning

of time by positive divine injunction, they may pass a law requiring him to obey his wife."

Mr. Collins said the Baltimore Conference had before them the opinion of Justice Merrick and were fully aware of the law of 1843 (of Maryland) when they acted in the Harding case. He added that "*if the law had been tenfold what it was . . . the Conference would still have acted just as they did; because they did not intend to change their ground, and could not pretend to alter their views with every shifting of the Legislature.* Besides, the Legislature did not compel Mr. Harding to become a slaveholder."

Rev. Mr. Griffith, another representative of the Baltimore Conference, spoke to the same effect, asserting that Maryland knew that her laws against manumission were illegal; that she "tried to control the thing *and ward off the consequences* by this kind of—I hardly know how to designate such kind of legislation."

Such utterances, setting aside in contempt the laws both of the Church and of the land (for the United States Constitution and laws expressly sanctioned and protected each State in just such laws as Maryland had, and which were thus denounced in the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church), produced great alarm among the cool, thoughtful members on both sides. Especially was the situation of much concern to members from Southern States, where the Union had always found its stanchest defenders, where constitutions and laws were ever held as sacred by all honorable, intelligent citizens; where no sentiment had ever found a home that looked to the violation of constitutions; where opinions could not be forced. The delegates from the South knew that if such ex-

pressions became the authoritative voice of the Church it would shut her out from every mile of territory in Southern States. And many Northern and Eastern members felt the gravity of the situatoin, and tried to stay the drift. But it was too late. The flood gates of prejudice, of an "awakened conscience" and unbridled determination if you will, were broken loose, and the pent-up waters must sweep through, and with them carry constitution, laws, rights, compacts, and people, if any such were so unfortunate as to be in their way.

On May 11, the fifth day it had been before the Conference, the General Conference refused to reverse the decision of Baltimore, the vote being 56 for reversal and 117 against.

The delegates from the South felt that in this action all guarantees of protection under the Discipline were taken away. As if dazed, they awaited the blow they felt was coming. The case just acted on was soon found to be only the first rumbles and seismic tremblings that precede the rolling, mountain-rending earthquake. Southern delegates, and other sage and devout lovers of peace and unity from the North and East, saw the oncoming storm, and took themselves to counsel, to serious consultation, and to prayer. In the meantime, the abolition element, feeling itself unexpectedly strengthened by finding it was joined by the hitherto conservatives, with the "middlemen" placed where they felt bound to act with the extremists, became emboldened. The real object of the whole action became apparent at once.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Case of Bishop Andrew—How It Was Brought In.

The morning skies of the General Conference were dark and gloomy Friday, May 14. The storm seemed ready to burst upon the Church when no shelter appeared within reach. At this time, as a result of tears and prayers and pious counsel, two of the most eminent and able men of the Church, both alike known and loved for their ability, zeal, love for Zion, and sweet, self-sacrificing spirits, came forward—Dr. William Capers, of the South, and Dr. S. Olin, of the North, and offered the following resolution jointly:

"In view of the distracting agitation which has so long prevailed on the subject of slavery and abolition, and especially the difficulties under which we labor in the present General Conference on account of the relative position of our brethren North and South on this perplexing question; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That a committee of three from the North and three from the South be appointed to confer with the bishops, and report within two days, as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the pacification of the Church."

The "Conservatives" immediately demanded recognition on this committee, thus further complicating matters. They were not so recognized, but their demands gained them the name of "middlemen," the first time the writer finds this term used in history. Only two questions were raised, two sets of principles involved, and only two were represented on the

committee, very properly; three from the South and three from the North, viz.—Dr. William Capers, of South Carolina, Dr. William Winans, of Mississippi, Rev. John Early, of Virginia, representing the South; and Dr. Stephen Olin and Rev. Mr. Crandall, of New England, and Dr. Leonidas L. Hamline, of Ohio, representing the North.

The discussion of this proposition is most important as revealing the true status of the situation. It all went to prove that everything was projective, looking forward to a more important action which was kept constantly in mind. The Journal itself shows that the wider, more far-reaching action subsequently taken was never out of sight, all moves and speeches so far being advances toward the goal intended as the objective point from the beginning. Dr. Olin, whom history calls "the most eloquent Methodist orator," said:

"I have feared for two or three days that though possibly we might escape the disasters that threaten us, it is not probable. I have seen the cloud gathering so dark that it seemed there was no hope left for us unless God should give us hope. . . . From an intimate acquaintance with the feelings of my brethren in the work (on both extremes of the question), I see little ground of encouragement to hope. [Dr. Olin was a New Englander, who went South for his health, was converted there, served a number of years in the ministry, and was called back to New England to take the place of President Fisk in the college at Middleton on the death of the latter.] It appears to me that we stand committed on this question by our principles and views of policy, and neither of us dare move a step from our position. Let us keep away from the

controversy until brethren from opposites have come together. I confess that I turn away from it with sorrow and a deep feeling of apprehension that the difficulties that are upon us now threaten to be unmanageable. I feel it in my heart, and I never felt on any subject as I do on this. . . . I have had no part in this controversy. It has pleased God that I should be far away, or laid upon a bed of sickness. I have my opinions and attachments, but I am committed by no act of mine to either side; and I will take it on me to say freely that I do not see how Northern men can yield their ground, or Southern men give up theirs. I do indeed believe that if our affairs remain in their present position, and this General Conference do not speak out clearly and distinctly on the subject, however unpalatable it may be, they could not go home under this distracting question *without a certainty of breaking up their Conferences.* I have been to eight or ten of the Northern Conferences, and spoken freely with men of every class, and firmly believe that, *with the fewest exceptions*, they are influenced by the most ardent and the strongest desire to maintain the Discipline of our Church. Will the Southern men believe me in this, when I say I am sincere, and well informed on the subject? . . . Your Northern brethren, who seem to you to be arrayed in a hostile attitude, have suffered a great deal before they have taken their position, and they come up here distressed beyond measure, and disposed, if they believed they could, without destruction and ruin to the Church, to make concession. . . . I look to this measure with desire rather than with hope. With regard to our Southern brethren—and I hold that on this question, at least, I may speak with some confi-

dence—if they concede what the Northern brethren wish, if they concede that holding slaves is incompatible with their ministry, they may as well go to the Rocky Mountains as to their own sunny plains. The people will not hear it. They feel shut up to their principles on this point. . . . I believe there is not a man among them that would not make any sacrifice, and even die, if thereby they could heal this division. If our difficulties are unmanageable, let our spirit be right. If we must part, let us meet and pour out our tears together; and let us not give up until we have tried. I came to this Conference yesterday morning to offer another resolution that we, now that the Sabbath had intervened and shed its calmness and quiet over our agitated spirits, should suspend our duties for one day and devote it to fasting and prayer that God might help us, if he would, that if we cannot have union we might have peace. . . . I cannot speak on this subject without emotion. If we push our principles so far as to break up the connection, this may be the last time we may meet. I fear it! I fear it! I see no way of escape."

Dr. John Durbin said he saw hope in the fellowship and good spirits that were displayed by both sides.

Mr. Crandall said there was a *dark shade of difference between the brethren of the two extremes; they were standing on a volcano which might at any moment destroy them.* Yet he insisted that the North neither desired division, nor had expressed anything pointing thereto! Though the first mention of intimation of a division came from Northern delegates, and Southern delegates had constantly denied that the South desired or even expected it, Mr. Crandall and other Northern delegates continually brought this in, evidencing that

the only idea of the Northern leaders was that of extreme action in forcing their views without compromise. They knew this must, inevitably, compel a separation from the Southern territory, hence the insistence on the frequent references to the subject when mentioning the position of the South.

Mr. John Early spoke to the effect that the South were prepared to make any concessions in the spirit of love that they could without affecting their essential principles.

Dr. Smith said: "The South does not desire disunion. Come when it may, it shall be forced upon us."

These extracts could be extended, but all would be to the same purpose: Northern members talked of division, separation, and disunion, always as if the thing were settled that the South must be set off; Southern members disavowed any desire, purpose, or expectation of separation, relying upon the law and upon the same scriptural dealing and brotherly love and Christlike spirit to settle their differences as had closed threatened divisions in times past. It was a notable and amazing fact that ultra Northern and all New England delegates, except Dr. Olin and Dr. Bangs, spoke as if the South had brought slavery to this country and had fostered it; and that she had tried to force it on the North and "even on New England;" that it had taken the utmost strength of the pure and undefiled religion lodged in those sections to prevent the South from *forcing slavery on them.* This was the spirit and teaching of the speeches of those who expressed and carried the sentiments and will of the majority. Against utterances so at variance with the truth of history, so directly opposite to the origin and perpetuity of the "constitution," the leading South-

ern members felt it useless to argue. They saw the purpose and intention of those who were in the majority, and that "their consciences were in it," firing their zeal, so they lost hope.

The report of the special committee was expected on the 16th. Instead, Bishop Soule asked, in their behalf, further time. The interval served but to add fuel to the fire beneath the already boiling caldron.

On the 18th Bishop Soule reported for the committee that they had been unable to agree upon any plan of compromise to reconcile the views of the Northern and Southern Conferences.

This appeared as the opportune time for springing the mine that seems to have been carefully tunneled, bringing in the real question. So on the 20th Mr. Collins, whom we have seen as the active representative of the Baltimore Conference, offered the following preamble and resolution, which were adopted:

"Whereas it is currently reported and generally understood that one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church has become connected with slavery; and whereas it is due to the General Conference to have a proper understanding of the matter; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the Committee on Episcopacy be instructed to ascertain the facts in the case, and report the result of their investigation to this body to-morrow morning."

Thus, in a roundabout way, was the case of Bishop Andrew finally reached, the question always in view from the beginning.

CHAPTER IX.

The Facts and Actions in Bishop Andrew's Case—Preliminary Resolutions and Debates.

Tuesday, May 21, 1844, becomes a memorable day in Methodism. After the preliminaries of opening the Conference were concluded, Dr. Robert Paine, chairman of the Committee on Episcopacy, brought in the following report, in obedience to the Collins resolution, adopted Monday:

"The Committee on Episcopacy, to whom was referred a resolution submitted yesterday, instructing them to inquire whether any one of the Superintendents is connected with slavery, beg leave to present their report on the subject.

"The committee had ascertained, previous to the reference of the resolution, that Bishop Andrew is connected with slavery, and had obtained an interview with him on the subject; and having requested him to state the whole facts in the premises, hereby present a written communication from him in relation to this matter, and beg leave to offer it as his statement and explanation of the case:

"To the Committee on Episcopacy.

"*Dear Brethren:* In reply to your inquiry, I submit the following statement of all the facts bearing on my connection with slavery. Several years since an old lady of Augusta, Ga., bequeathed to me a mulatto girl, in trust, that I should take care of her until she should be nineteen years of age; that, *with her consent*, I should then send her to Liberia; and that in case of her refusal I should keep her, and make her as

free as the laws of the State of Georgia would permit. When the time arrived she refused to go to Liberia, and of her choice remains *legally* my slave, although I derive no pecuniary advantage from her, she continuing to live in her own house on my lot; and has been and still is at perfect liberty to go to a free State at her pleasure; but the laws of the State will not permit her emancipation, nor admit such deed of emancipation to record, and she refuses to leave the State. In her case, therefore, I have been made a slaveholder legally, but not with my own consent.

"Secondly, about five years since the mother of my former wife left to her daughter, *not to me*, a negro boy, and as my wife died without a will more than two years since, by the laws of the State he becomes legally my property. In this case, as in the former, emancipation is impracticable in the State; but he shall be at liberty to leave the State whenever I shall be satisfied that he is prepared to provide for himself, or I can have sufficient security that he will be protected and provided for in the place to which he may go.

"Thirdly, in the month of January last I married my present wife, she being at the time possessed of slaves inherited from her former husband's estate, and belonging to *her*. Shortly after my marriage, being unwilling to become their owner, regarding them as strictly hers, and the law not permitting their emancipation, I secured them to her by a deed of trust.

"It will be obvious to you, from the above statement of facts, that I have neither bought nor sold a slave; that in the only circumstances in which I am legally a slaveholder emancipation is impracticable. As to the servants owned by my wife, I have no legal

responsibility in the premise, nor could my wife emancipate did she desire to do so. I have thus plainly stated all the facts in the case, and submit the statement for the consideration of the General Conference. JAMES O. ANDREW."

Mr. Collins immediately moved that the report and statement be made the special order of the next morning (Wednesday). He frankly assigned as a reason for this motion that there would be a meeting of the *Northern delegates* that afternoon, for the purpose of perfecting plans, as was distinctly understood, for conducting the prosecution. This announcement immediately brought a call for a meeting of Southern delegates on the same afternoon. This shows exactly the status of affairs—that the North and South were organizing and preparing for "the irrepressible conflict," the former for the attack, the latter for defense.

A note from Dr. Bond, who was not a member, disclaimed any connection with, or knowledge of, a rumored organization of Northern members to force the Southern members into secession. He followed his note by a verbal declaration that he did not believe any such movement existed. This brought Dr. Bangs to his feet. He too had heard the rumor, he said; that the avowed purpose was to adopt measures that would (sic) compel Bishop Andrew to resign and force the South to secede, and then to seize on the Church property. He exclaimed, with much feeling: *"I cannot believe it!"*

In the light of what followed within a few days, the above shows that the maturing plans were kept from such men as Drs. Olin, Bangs, and Bond.

The next morning Mr. Griffith, the colleague of Mr.

Collins, called up the special order, and offered a preamble and resolution wherein the preamble asserted that it had been, from the origin of the Church, "a settled policy and invariable usage to elect no person to the office of bishop who was embarrassed with this 'great evil;'" and intimating that Bishop Andrew had been elected from the South on the nomination of Southern delegates in 1832 with a tacit understanding that he would never be connected with slavery. The resolution following this preamble was as follows:

"*Resolved*, That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby, affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Mr. Griffith then opened the discussion, using precisely the same argument he had used in July, 1824, when he warned the Church against the "Episcopal prerogatives" exercised by Bishop McKendree. He maintained that a bishop, being the "mere creature of the General Conference," was simply an officer of that body; that his election "was not for life or good behavior, *but during the pleasure of the General Conference.*"

This speech sounded a note that was harped upon by many others, and was soon the accepted tone of the majority; it took a position that the Northern branch of the Church has had to maintain ever since.

Mr. Sandford, of New York, spoke for the resolution. He advocated it on the ground of *expediency*, because of the consequences which he saw would result from a failure to deal with Bishop Andrew for his connection with slavery. He said:

"In the majority of the [Annual] Conferences that compose this vast body, if something be not done to

remove the evil connected with the superintendency of Bishop Andrew out of the way, we cannot possibly avoid convulsions and the loss of very large numbers of our members, and give opportunity to our enemies to exert a destructive influence within the ranks of our community. This is clear and certain, and does not admit of a single doubt. It is on this, and on this alone, that I wish to rest the expediency of the measure now proposed."

Dr. Winans, of Mississippi, was the first speaker for the Southern side, opposed to the resolution. He showed that Bishop Andrew was a slaveholder in 1840, while presiding in Northern Conferences, as much as he was in January, 1844. That, in the light of facts and reason, the only difference was "he had married a woman," and had ceased to be a bishop. On the question of expediency the great, tall Mississippian said:

"But, sir, the main point relied upon in this matter is the expediency of the course contemplated. Expediency! In other words such a state of things has been gotten up in the North and in the West as renders it necessary for Bishop Andrew to retire from the office of the superintendency, if we would preserve the union of the Church. Sir, I will meet this by another argument on expediency. By the vote contemplated by this body, and solicited by this resolution, you will render it expedient—nay, more, you render it indispensable—nay, more, you render it uncontrollably necessary—that a large portion of the Church—and, permit me to add, a portion *always conformed in their views and practices to the Discipline of the Church*—I say that by this vote you render it indispensably—aye, uncontrollably—necessary that that portion of the Church

(within slaveholding States) should—I dread to pronounce the word, but you understand me. . . . It is not because there are prejudices waked up by unceasing agitations year after year in opposition to the spirit and language of the Discipline; but it arises out of the established laws of society, from a state of things that is under the control of politics and the civil government, which no minister of the gospel can control or influence in the smallest degree. If you pass this action in the mildest form in which you can approach the bishop, you will throw every minister in the South *hors du combat;* you will cut us off from all connection with masters and servants, and will leave us no option—God is my witness that I speak with all sincerity of purpose toward you—but to be disconnected with your body. If such necessity exists on your part to drive this man from his office, we reassert that this must be the result of your action in the matter. We have no will, no choice in this thing. It comes upon us as destiny; it comes with overwhelming force, and all we can do is to submit to it. . . . There may come a time when your hearts will bleed at the recollection of having cut off from your body—*for we will never go voluntarily*—as firm and good friends, and as honest in our attachment to Discipline, as any other portion of the Church."

It is well to here state that from the very beginning of the debate on this question it was held by Northern delegates that unless the Conference proceeded against Bishop Andrew vast numbers and whole Conferences would abandon the Church in the North; and Southern delegates as earnestly and honestly held that if they did so proceed, the South would be inevitably compelled to separate.

The speech of Dr. Lovick Pierce deserves special attention, and the student should rest satisfied with nothing short of a reading of the entire speech. He stands as one of the most remarkable men in American Methodism, not less for the personal sacrifices he made than for his preëminent abilities. His life, his work, his zeal, and his spiritual force kept march with the century. He was almost contemporary with the beginning of American Methodism. He was contemporary with and a part of every movement that formed and crystallized Episcopal Methodism, that solidified the various divisions into their separate completeness and made its most important history for all time. He was a member of the first delegated General Conference, that met in New York in 1812, and of every General Conference since, up to this one. He said in part:

"Allow me to say, the adoption of the resolution on the ground of expediency is, in the very nature of the case, to invert the established order of the New Testament. In the difficulties which arose in the Church in the days of the great apostle to the Gentiles, he said in reference to this point: 'All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient.' Shall we ask Bishop Andrew to pay this tribute to expediency? Why, if it were lawful to demand it, and the yielding of it would produce such disastrous results as must be produced, it would be inexpedient for this body of God-fearing ministers to make any such demand. To the law and to the testimony I feel myself bound closely to adhere. Of all notions that were ever defended before a body of Christian ministers, the notion of asking an act of this sort on the ground of expediency, when it is as inexpedient for

one portion of a united body of Christians to do this as it is expedient for the other that it should be done, is to me the most fearful mockery of sound logic. Do that which is inexpedient to us because for you it is expedient! Never while the heavens are above the earth let that be recorded on the journals of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church! Do you ask us how this matter is to be met? It is to be met by the conservative principle and the compromise laws of this book of Discipline. Show your people *that Bishop Andrew has violated any one of the established rules and regulations of this Church, and you put yourselves in the right and us in the wrong.*"

Mr. J. C. Berryman, of Missouri, said he would vote with only the Discipline and the law in mind, and he believed the preamble and resolution not in accord therewith.

"I shall give my vote in favor of the resolution, but do not like to be considered as an enemy of my Southern brethren," said Mr. Coleman, of the Troy Conference. He was unprepared for the strife he found imminent in the Church, as he had supposed "that the firebrands left our ranks last year." He had opposed abolitionism from the beginning, and spoke of his and other Northern brethren's hard battles for the South. "But," he added, "give us a slaveholding bishop, and you make the whole of the North a magazine of gunpowder, and the bishop a firebrand in the midst."

Mr. Stringfield, of the Holston Conference, said if the bishop had done anything wrong, and against the laws of the Church, the crime should be defined and punishment inflicted by the Conference. But no crime was charged, it was even admitted that no offense against the Discipline and laws could be charged, but

on the grounds of *expediency* the bishop was asked to inflict a penalty on himself by a forced resignation. . . . As to expediency, it would be highly inexpedient for him to resign, for if you *shuffle him out* some one must be put in his place; that one, of course, must come from the North. And that one would be as unacceptable in the South as Bishop Andrew possibly *could be* in the North."

Mr. Spencer, of the Pittsburg Conference, met the arguments as to there being no violation of law, and the *ex post facto* aspect, by saying: "To punish Bishop Andrew for an act *not against law at the time it occurred,* is not in the nature of *ex post facto* action, because the proceeding is a *present action* to counteract the effects of past conduct *not covered by the law.*" [Following such construction, it is not discernible how any prohibition of *ex post facto* action could possibly be made to operate.] As to expediency, he tries to brush away opposition thereto thus: "This is a grave matter. But is not expediency at the bottom of many grave and important subjects? Mr. President, how did you and your colleagues get into the episcopal office? Expediency put you there, expediency keeps you there, and when expediency requires it you shall be removed from your seats, yes, every one of you. Expediency is the foundation of our episcopacy. Nay, more, it is the very basis of Methodism. . . . If he [Bishop Andrew] cannot get rid of slavery where he is, let him go where he can."

Mr. Spencer spoke lightly, humorously, and ironically of Bishop Andrew's recent marriage. He inquired, in language more liberal than dignified, if the Bishop had fallen so desperately in love that he felt obliged to marry; whether, at his age, being old

enough to be a grandfather, the Bishop had fallen into a chicken fit. These and other like offhand remarks probably gave Dr. Bangs the idea and opportunity (in his speech as to a slaveholding bishop being contrary to Methodist *usage*, admitting that in the first two instances no blame could be attached to the Bishop) to add: "But will any one avow that he was not a free agent when he connected himself with this lady? No one will avow it. He therefore acted imprudently." The Doctor quoted 1 Corinthians viii. 13 as an example for Bishop Andrew.

CHAPTER X.

The Finley-Trimble Substitute—Speeches of Dr. Olin—Dr. Hamline—Bishop Soule.

The debate on the Collins preamble and resolution continued until the 23d, and took a wide range. No restraint was laid on delegates, and every grievance, past, present, and prospective, was animadverted upon by members in the rambling discussion. But some of the speeches were great efforts, pregnant with thought, logic, and far-seeing statesmanship, sweetened by that love which "rejoiceth not in iniquity," but "rejoiceth with the truth." Such speeches became history, they are epoch-marking, as showing the honest differences, the widely separating lines along which each side felt called of God to travel; and each position, from the respective points of view, shown to be equally logical, equally right. The only difficulty was in one side trying to compel the other to its way of thinking and acting while working amid far different conditions, asserting that any persons taking a different view were bound to be wrong—a principle which, once admitted, would sweep every Church on earth into the Roman Catholic organization.

Dr. A. L. P. Green, of Tennessee, answered the question as to what to the South would result from the passing the resolution. He showed that Methodism would be completely shut out there. He said the submission of Southern delegates to the "unjust and extrajudicial proceeding" against Bishop Andrew would render it impossible for the preachers from the

South to go back there and serve the people. "And," he added, "it is very certain that those who deposed him could never supply our place." He recognized the difficulties in the North, and was willing to give them every advantage desired "without destroying the South." He pointed out that from present conditions no bishop could be elected from the South, and asked if having all the bishops henceforth was not enough to intrench the North from the attacks of abolitionists? "I think so," he said. "It is no small matter with the South that none of our Southern preachers can be elected a bishop. Yet we will not fall out with you because you *dare not* elect a brother from the South, but we will never submit to the doctrine that it *shall not* be done."

On the vast difference between "dare not" (the doctrine of expediency) and "shall not," the doctrine of compelling the minority to admit itself morally wrong, the Church stopped. It was the Charybidis that swirled the bark of Ulysses on to Scylla.

Late on that memorable Thursday (May 23) the following preamble and resolution, known as the "Finley Substitute," were offered as a substitute for the Collins resolution:

"Whereas the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Con-

ference that he desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains."

Again debate became warm and earnest. Most members on both sides spoke with heat and emphasis, as if in large capitals. Vehemence in reiterating old positions and assumptions took the place of new points or fresh illustrations. But some utterances were like keynotes to a song: they pitched the tune to whose tones every note has since been uttered.

"The most eloquent preacher in Methodism," as Dr. S. Olin has been styled, spoke for both sides, in part as follows:

"If there ever was a question beset with great practical difficulties, surely it is that under which we now groan. Yet our powers are so great as to allow us to make some provision against them; and, to some extent, at least, meet the wants of the Church in this great emergency. . . . I believe *we are all prepared to recognize the right of Southern brethren to hold slaves under the provisions of the Discipline.* We shall acknowledge and guarantee the entirety of the privileges and immunities of all parties in the Church. . . . I here declare that if a remedy should be proposed that would intrench on the constitutional claims of Southern ministers, I would not, to save the Church from any possible calamity, violate this great charter of our rights. I am glad of the opportunity of saying that *no man who is a Methodist and deserves a place among us* can call in question here any rights secured by our charter. [He meant the Discipline as our supreme law.] I do not say that he may not be a very honest or a very pious man who doubts the compatibility of slaveholding on the conditions of the Discipline with the ministerial office, *but he is not a*

Methodist. He may be a very good man, *but a very bad Methodist*; and if such a man doubts if the Church will reform, or is too impatient of delay, let him, as I would in his place [sic], do as our *friends in New England* did last year: go to some other Church, or *set up one for himself.*

"Not only is holding slaves, on the conditions and under the restrictions of the Discipline, no disqualification for the ministerial office; but I will go a little farther and say that slaveholding is not constitutionally a forfeiture of a man's right, if he may be said to have one, to the office of a bishop. . . . These are my principles. I have never doubted with regard to them."

He then spoke from a personal knowledge of the better condition of the slave with a Christian master; the deep spirituality and self-sacrificing devotion of ministers in the South; that if ever he had seen the graces of the Christian ministry displayed or its virtues developed, it had been among slaveholders. He delivered the most exalted eulogy on Bishop Andrew; said he knew no man who had been so bold an advocate for the interest of the slave; that if ever there was a man worthy to fill the office of a bishop by disinterestedness, his love for the Church, his ardent, melting sympathy for the interests of humanity, but above all for his uncompromising and unreserved advocacy of the interests of the slave, that man was James O. Andrew. "Excepting one honored brother, whose name will hereafter be recorded as one of the greatest benefactors of the African race [meaning Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Capers], I know of no man *who has done so much for the slave as Bishop Andrew.*

"It will be readily inferred, from what I have said,

that if we cannot act without calling in question the rights of the Southern brethren, we had better, in my opinion, not act at all; for I believe it would be better to *submit to the greatest calamities than infringe upon our own constitution. . . . We cannot punish!* I would not vote for any resolution that would even censure; and yet, with the powers that confessedly belong to the General Conference, I trust some measure may be adopted that may greatly palliate and diminish, if it cannot wholly avert, the dangers that threaten us. The substitute now proposed I regard as such a measure. . . . I know the difficulties of the South, . . . the excitement that is likely to prevail among the people there. Yet, allowing our worst fears to be realized, the South will have this advantage over us: the Southern Conferences are likely, in any event, to harmonize among themselves; they will form a compact body. In our *Northern Conferences this will be impossible in the present state of affairs. . . .* [A prophecy wonderfully fulfilled.] I speak on this point in accordance with the conviction of my own judgment, after having traveled three thousand miles through the New England and New York Conferences, that if some action is not had on this subject calculated to hold out hope, *to impart a measure of satisfaction to the people, there will be distractions and divisions* ruinous to souls, and fatal to the permanent interests of the Church. . . . I feel, sir, that if this great difficulty shall result in our separation from our Southern brethren, we lose not our right hand merely, but our very heart's blood."

Mr. Drake, of Mississippi, held that it was universally understood, before this General Conference, that a bishop held his office for life, *or good behavior.* He

held that to say a bishop could be virtually deposed, and not censured, was absurd in the extreme. According to the acknowledgment of the ablest advocates of the substitute, Bishop Andrew could not be punished without an extrajudicial act. He said the *Southern members would never become seceders,* but would abide by the Discipline, and from this even a majority had no right to drive them. That were the concession now demanded by the majority made by the South, it would not satisfy the North. He had been at pains to inquire, and they had all answered him that this would *satisfy them for the present.* He offered a suggestion that the bishops assign territory to each other with a view of each superintendent presiding where he would be acceptable. No action was taken on this, as it was not in order.

Mr. Slicer, of the Baltimore Conference, wanted the substitute passed, agreeing that Bishop Andrew had not violated any law of Discipline, but he had "offended against the great law of expediency."

A bitter speech followed by Mr. Cass, of New Hampshire, who said he differed with Dr. Olin, and with every one, even the Discipline, in declaring mere slaveholding, in a State where they could not be freed, no bar to th ministry and office. He said it was morally wrong in any one anywhere, and Bishop Andrew should be made to suffer for his great moral wrong and for the suffering he had brought on the Church. He would let no law of the Church stand in the way of punishing a member—if the majority saw fit to declare it a wrong—even without the formality of a trial.

Mr. George F. Pierce, of Georgia, afterwards a Southern bishop, followed in an elaborate speech.

He said no amount of disclaimers in words would prevent the world from knowing that the act contemplated demanded that the South be required to do what the laws of the States specially declared should not be done; that the world would know the act was a plain and deliberate infraction of the constitutional or disciplinary rights of the Southern brethren.

Mr. J. T. Peck, of the Troy Conference, afterwards a Northern bishop, claimed the distinction of making a speech against Bishop Andrew that must be compared with Archbishop (now Cardinal) Gibbons's "The Faith of our Fathers," for its giving to history an interpretation directly opposite to that universally accepted; for stating as a fact exactly contrary to what historians have recorded as true on the "vexed question." He said, in the fervid, vehement style that was his alone: "We are happy that New England is with us to a man in this unhappy conflict; that the united West, and North, and East form an insuperable barrier to the advance of slavery! O sir, I fear me much our brethren in the South are deceiving themselves in this matter. This has never been a question of *principle* between us and New England. We have ALWAYS *been agreed* in fundamental antislavery sentiments. . . . It has always been purely a question of *measures* between us. In this, it is true, we have differed, but in opposition of *principle to slavery, North, East, and West*, we have *always* been, and I trust shall ever remain, inseparably united. We resist, as one man, the advancement of slavery, which, not content to be confined within [sic] *its own geographical limits, threatens to roll its dark waves over the North!*"

It ought to be noted that the reading of this would make history record that slavery never existed in New

England or the North; that those sections had always opposed it; that no slave had ever been held in those favored sections; that it had been introduced by and existed only in the South, which latter section had tried, and was still trying (in 1844), to introduce it in New England and in the North. That fragment of Mr. Peck's spech will show to what extent passion and prejudice dominated the minds of good and great men in that "irrepressible conflict."

Dr. L. L. Hamline, of Ohio, elected bishop at that Conference, made a speech which may be said to have fixed the policy of the Northern branch of the Church regarding a bishop, and which constitutes to-day one of the fundamental differences between the two branches of Episcopal Methodism, and which difference is an insurmountable barrier to their organic union.

Dr. Hamline took the ground that a bishop was an officer at the entire disposal of the General Conference. It "could create and it destroy" the official filling the office, though it could not do away with the office. He held that even the ordination of a bishop was a mere incidental formality which could be done away with by the General Conference at will, and still leave the office all that the constitution intended; that the manner of setting aside the officer for the office, and as to when and how the officer might be put out, were questions lying wholly with the General Conference. A bishop was simply an officer of the General Conference, he said, and that body had the power, under the constitution, to vote him out without even going as far as they now proposed to do, and giving a reason; that it was precisely analogous to the stationing of the preachers by a bishop. The latter moved a preacher

at will; the General Conference appointed a bishop (by vote) as a superintendent; they could in the same way appoint him to a pastorate. (For an able discussion and analysis of this astonishing speech see "The Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1844-46: Comprising a Thirty Years' History of the Relations of the Two Methodisms," by Edward H. Myers, D.D. Dr. Myers shows, by going back to the *beginning*, that "the Methodist Episcopal Church, *much less the General Conference*, never created its episcopacy. On the contrary, the episcopacy organized, and gave ecclesiastical vitality to, . . . the Methodist Episcopal Church.)

The speech of Dr. Hamline was delivered on Monday, May 27. This was followed by Dr. Smith, of Virginia, and others, including Mr. Collins, of Baltimore, with some compromise whereases and resolutions. Then Bishop Andrew himself addressed the Conference at length, every sentence breathing love, forbearance, and the sweetest Christian spirit. He elaborated the facts in his "statement" already given.

On the 29th, Bishop Soule, who had written the very "constitution" so many were "construing" with such variant meanings, addressed the Conference. He had drawn up the very instrument in 1808 the delegates were now interpreting each to fit the section where he lived, and to cover the conflicting points and govern the opposing principles raised or announced in 1844. Bishop Soule, the New Englander, for the second time during the thirty-six years that had elapsed since he wrote the "Constitution of Episcopal Methodism," arose to defend that instrument. He read that part of the Episcopal Address of 1840 bearing upon slavery, interpreting the law and setting forth

the spirit of Methodism as in harmony with the Scriptures; and said, in part, regarding the amazing interpretation put upon it by Dr. Hamline:

"I wish to say explicitly that if the superintendents are to be regarded only as the officers of the General Conference, liable to be deposed at will by a simple majority of this body without a form of trial, no obligation existing, growing out of the constitution and laws of the Church, even to assign cause wherefore, everything I have to say hereafter is powerless and falls to the ground. But brethren will permit me to say, strange as it may seem, although I have had the honor and privilege to be a member of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever since its present organization; though I was honored with a seat in the convention of ministers which organized it in this respect, I have heard for the first time, either on the floor of the Conference, in an Annual Conference, or through the whole of the private membership of the Church, this doctrine advanced; this is the first time I ever heard of it; *of course it struck me as a novelty.*

". . . I desire to understand my landmarks as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, not the bishop of the General Conference, not the bishop of any Annual Conference. I thought that the constitution of the Church, its laws and regulations, . . . the many solemn vows of ordination, the parchment which I hold under the signatures of the departed dead—I thought that these had prescribed my duties. . . . This Conference . . . is to settle this question, whether it is the right of this body, and whether they have the power, to depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether they have a right to

depose me, without a form of trial. See ye to that! Without specification of wrong, and by almost universal acclamation over this whole house that Bishop Andrew has been unblemished in his Christian character; without blame in his ministerial vocation; that he has discharged the duties of his sacred office to the Church of God with integrity, with usefulness, and with almost universal acceptability, and in good faith—with this declaration before the community, before the world, will this Conference occupy this position: that they have power, authority to depose Bishop Andrew without a form of trial, without charge, and without once being called on to answer for himself in the premises (what he did say was voluntary)?

"Well, brethren, I had understood from the beginning that special provision was made for the trial of a bishop. The constitution has provided [he wrote it] that no preacher, no person is to be deprived of the right of trial according to the forms of the Discipline, and of the right of appeal; but, sir, if I understand the doctrine advanced and vindicated, it is that you may depose a bishop without form of trial; you may depose him without any obligation to show cause. It seems to me that the Church has made special provisions for the trial of a bishop, for the special reason that the bishop has no appeal. . . . You must . . . unmove me from my anchorage on the basis of this book, you must unsettle me from the principles—my settled and fixed principles. From these I cannot be shaken by any influences on my right-hand or on my left-hand—neither the zeal of youth nor the experience of hoary age shall move me from my principles. . . . And here it may be necessary that I should make an observation in regard to what I have said be-

fore—it seems to have been misunderstood. I said, you cannot immolate me on a Southern altar; you cannot immolate me on a Northern altar; I can only be immolated on the altar of the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. What do I mean by this? I mean—call it a compact, call it a compromise, constitutional discipline, what you will—I mean on the doctrines and provisions of this book, and I consider this the bond of union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Here, then, I plant my feet, and here I stand. Let brethren, sir, not misunderstand me on another point. . . . I hold that the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has an indisputable right . . . to arraign at her tribunal every bishop; try us there; to find us guilty of an offense with which we are charged on evidence, and to excommunicate, to expel us. I am always ready to appear before that body in this regard. I recognize fully their right. But not for myself, not for these men on my right-hand and on my left-hand, but for your sakes and the Church of God of which you are members and ministers, let me ask you, let me entreat you, not to rush upon the resolution now before you. Posterity, sir, will review your actions. History will record them; . . . whatever we may do will be spread out before the face of the world; the eyes of men will be fixed upon it." (The student is urged to read this great speech entire as it is given in "The History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," pp. 48-60.)

Dr. J. P. Durbin, the great Kentuckian, spoke next and rallied the scattered forces that Bishop Soule had about decided to stand "to the law and the testimony." He enlarged on Dr. Hamline's view of the Episcopal office. It was a strange, a striking spectacle; the New

Englander defending the Southern view as being in accordance with the position, action, and express law of the Church as based on Scripture; the Kentuckian opposing the Southern view, acknowledging that law and precedent were with them, but declaring it was now a wrong position because *inexpedient.* So far as can be found, this is the first time mere *expediency* was ever pleaded in a religious body in justification of the violation of express law and setting aside of rights.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BISHOPS' COMPROMISE—SAD "FACTS" IN BISHOP HEDDING'S CASE OF WITHDRAWAL OF HIS NAME—REJECTED—VOTE ON FINLEY SUBSTITUTE—SOUTH "PROTESTS."

AFTER an able and touching speech by Dr. Capers, of South Carolina, Bishop Hedding, on May 30, requested that the Conference might hold an afternoon session, as the bishops wished an opportunity to consult together, with a view to fixing on a compromise. This was granted. On May 31 the bishops submitted their plan, known as "the bishops' compromise."

On motion of Mr. Collins, it was laid over for one day. The "compromise" was that the case of Bishop Andrew be left to a final disposition until the next General Conference; and that in the meantime the episcopacy would assign Bishop Andrew work where there would be no doubt of his acceptability.

Momentous things hung on the action of that body on the morning of June 1, 1844. Just as the Conference was ready to take up the compromise Bishop Hedding amazed his colleagues and astonished all (except an "inside few" of the delegates) by requesting that he be allowed to withdraw his name from that document. He gave no reason for this sudden change except that he was disappointed in its not being able to accomplish the purpose intended. He said (sic) that he had been led to sign it because he believed it would be a peace measure, and that it would prove acceptable to the Conference. He said in both these

hopes he was disappointed, *as facts had come to his knowledge* which induced him to believe it would not bring peace and would only increase the difficulty. It was a most dramatic moment. His colleagues were surprised. Bishop Waugh quickly arose and said he wished his name to remain. Bishop Morris said he wished his name attached to that document as a testimony that he had done what he could to preserve the unity of the body. Bishop Soule said he put his "signature to the document with the same views and under the same convictions as my worthy colleagues, and neither my views nor my convictions have changed, . . . and I wish my signature to that document to go forth through a thousand channels to the world."

Bishop Hedding did not state the "facts" that caused him to suddenly change his mind, and there was wonder among the brethren. But, twenty-seven years later (April, 1871), Rev. James Porter, who was a delegate from the New England Conference in 1844, gives the "facts" in a contribution to the Methodist *Quarterly Review*. He tells of a caucus of "*abolition delegates*," held immediately after the bishops' compromise was suggested, as they regarded it an alarming measure to their cause. Mr. Porter says that at this caucus a paper was read solemnly declaring it the conviction of the New England delegates that if Bishop Andrew were retained in office it would break up most of the New England Conferences, and that, if the recommendation of the bishops were carried out, the only way to *hold them together would be to secede in a body*. So they unanimously adopted this paper, with the additional agreement that they would ask Bishop Hedding to secede and become their bishop. Mr. Porter

goes on to show that they found it impossible to see Bishop Hedding to inform him of this secret action before the bishops met; and that they were afraid to call him out of the council in time to persuade him not to sign the document, as they feared such action might be construed in a way to defeat their object. Yet they plainly saw that their scheme—and Bishop Hedding's sudden change—would appear in an unenviable light if the document were adopted with his (Hedding's) name to it. But (according to Mr. Porter, who was one of the "caucus") *they saw Bishop Hedding before action was taken*, and he was put in possession of "some facts" that were sufficient to induce him to withdraw his name and cause the dramatic incident in that exciting time as recorded above. Until Mr. Porter gave this "undiscovered," or rather hidden, chapter in our history this was a mystery. Now we see that the object in view, as far as Bishop Hedding was concerned, was defeated by himself clearing the way for him to become exclusively a New England bishop; his defection defeated the "bishops' compromise" and hastened the great cataclysm.

On motion of Dr. Nathan Bangs, the compromise was tabled (defeated) by the following vote, which vote is of the utmost importance, since it has been asserted, and largely believed, that it was defeated by the votes of Southern delegates. By Conferences the vote was: YEAS: *New York Conference*—Bangs, Rice, G. Peck, Stratten, Sanford, F. Reed, Ferguson, Martindale, Richardson; *Providence*—Lovejoy, Upham, Benton, Townsend; *New England*—J. Porter, King, Crandall, C. Adams, Pickering; *Maine*—Hill, E. Robinson, Randall, Morse, Hobart, Nickerson, Webber; *New Hampshire*—E. Scott, Chamberlain, Kelly, Per-

kins, Dow, Spaulding, Cahoon, Cass; *Troy*—Seymour, Weaver, Coleman, Spicer, Covel, Houghtaling, J. T. Peck; *Black River*—A. D. Peck, A. Adams, Baker, Ninde; *Oneida*—Snyder, Comfort, Rounds, Shepherd, Row, Bowen, Holmes; *Genesee*—Filmore, Lucky, Steel, Abell, Hosmer; *Erie*—Steadman, Bain, Clarke, J. Robinson, Goodwin; *Pittsburg*—W. Hunter, H. J. Clark, Spencer, S. Elliott, Boyd, Wakefield, Drummond; *Ohio*—C. Elliot, Raper, Trimble, Finley, Hamline, Connell, Ferree; *North Ohio*—E. Thompson, Power, Poe, Yocum, Runnells; *Michigan*—Crane, Billings. Baugham; *Indiana*—Simpson, Wiley, Ames, Miller, Wood, Eddy; *Rock River*—Mitchell; *Illinois*—Akers, Cartwright; *Baltimore*—Griffith; *New Jersey*—Shaw, Winner. 95.

NAYS: *New York Conference*—Olin, Carpenter; *Genesee*—Hibbard, Seager, Alverson; *Ohio*—Sehon; *Michigan*—G. Smith; *Indiana*—Ruter, Haven; *Rock River*—Weed, Sinclair, H. W. Reed; *Illinois*—Stamper, Vancleve, N. G. Berryman; *Missouri*—Redman, W. Patton, J. C. Berryman, J. M. Jameson; *Kentucky*—Bascom, Gunn, Kavanaugh, Stevenson, Crouch, Brush; *Holston*—Sevier, S. Patton, T. Stringfield; *Tennessee*—R. Paine, McFerrin, Green, Maddin; *Memphis*—Harris, Moody, McMahon, Joyner; *Arkansas*—J. C. Parker, Ratcliffe, A. Hunter; *Texas*—Fowler, J. Clarke; *Mississippi*—Winans, Drake, Lane, Rogers; *Alabama*—Murrah, Boring, Garrett, Hamilton; *Georgia*—Lovick Pierce, George F. Pierce, Parks, Glenn, Evans, Longstreet; *South Carolina*—Capers, Wightman, Betts, Dunwody, Walker; *North Carolina*—J. Jamieson, Doub, Blake; *Virginia*—Early, Lee, W. A. Smith, Crowder; *Baltimore*—Slicer, Bear, Morgan, Tippett, Sargent, Collins, Gere, Hildt; *Philadelphia*—Durbin,

T. J. Thompson, White, L. Scott, W. Cooper, I. T. Cooper; *New Jersey*—J. S. Porter, Neal, Sovereign. 84.

The student who loves *Methodism* sufficiently to desire her unity in truth and peace will find great help in analyzing that vote. Of the nineteen Northern Conferences (meaning those opposed to Bishop Andrew as a bishop at that time), ten of them divided their votes on this question. It was a considerable division, as will be seen by the fact that it stood (of the seventy votes in these divided Conferences) thirty-seven for tabling and thirty-three against. This made the Northern Conferences vote forty per cent of the eighty-four against tabling, and the South was unanimous against it. Of the ninety-five votes in favor of tabling, the New England Conferences were unanimous, the Baltimore Conference gave only one for it, the Philadelphia none, and the ten divided Northern Conferences only thirty-seven out of seventy cast by them, making their vote in favor of it only thirty-nine per cent of the ninety-five votes cast. Or of the total vote of one hundred and seventy-nine, the South had fifty-one, and cast them all against tabling the compromise; the North had one hundred and twenty-eight and cast thirty-three of these—about twenty-six per cent of the total Northern vote—against tabling. That is, the bishops' compromise was defeated entirely by the New England and part of the Northern and Western Conferences, every one of the fifty-one votes of the South, and thirty-three of the one hundred and twenty-eight votes of the Northern and Western Conferences being in favor of the compromise. It is significant that such men as Olin, Durbin, and Ruter stood by the compromise.

The "Finley substitute" (see Chapter X.) was then taken up and adopted by the following vote: Yeas, 111; nays, 69. In this vote Mr. J. Clarke, of the republic of Texas, went with the majority, all the other Southern delegates voting against it, together with C. W. Carpenter, of the New York Conference; G. Smith, of the Michigan; J. Sinclair, of the Rock River; J. Stamper, J. Vancleve, and N. G. Berryman, of the Illinois; E. W. Sehon, of the Ohio; H. Slicer, J. A. Gere, T. B. Sargent, and C. B. Tippett, of the Baltimore; T. J. Thompson, H. White, W. Cooper, and I. T. Cooper, of the Philadelphia; and Thomas Neal and Thomas Sovereign, of the New Jersey, giving seventeen Northern votes with the South.

Dr. Lovick Pierce immediately gave notice that the minority would bring in a protest as soon as it could be prepared, to be entered on the journal, as it was then late on Saturday.

On Monday, June 3, Messrs. Slicer and Sargent, of the Baltimore Conference, offered the following:

"*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that the vote of Saturday last in the case of Bishop Andrew be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate. . . . That the final disposition of Bishop Andrew's case be postponed until the General Conference of 1848, in conformity with the suggestion of the bishops in their address to the Conference Friday, May 31."

The mind and purpose of the Conference were expressed in the vote by which this was tabled—75 ayes, 68 noes.

Dr. Capers then offered a series of resolutions outlining a plan for the Church to have two General Conferences, "The Northern General Conference of the

Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States" and "The Southern General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States," the latter to have jurisdiction in all slaveholding Conferences (including the republic of Texas); the publishing interests and missionary enterprises to be conducted jointly.

On motion of Dr. Bangs, this paper was referred to a special committee consisting of Messrs. Capers, Winans, Crowder, Porter, Filmore, Akers, Hamline, Davis, and Sanford.

Wednesday, June 5, Dr. Capers, for this committee, reported that they could not agree on a report, and Dr. A. B. Longstreet, of Georgia, presented a paper on behalf of the Southern delegates as their "declaration." It declared that the continued agitation of the subject of slavery and "the extrajudicial action against Bishop Andrew would render it impossible for the ministry to succeed in slaveholding Conferences while under the jurisdiction of this General Conference." This declaration was signed by fifty of the fifty-one delegates from slaveholding Conferences, J. Clarke, of Texas, refusing to sign it.

On motion of Dr. S. Elliott, of Pittsburg, the declaration was referred to a committee of nine—three from the Northern, three from the Southern, and three from the "middle" Conferences—viz., Robert Paine, Glezen Filmore, Peter Akers, Nathan Bangs, Thomas Crowder, Thomas B. Sargent, William Winans, Leonidas L. Hamline, and James Porter.

Messrs. John B. McFerrin, of the Tennessee Conference, and Tobias Spicer, of the Troy Conference, offered a resolution instructing the above committee, in the event of failure, to agree on a plan of "adjust-

ment of present difficulties, to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church."

Mr. Crowder, one of the Select Committee of Nine, desired to strike "constitutional" out of the above, but this was voted down, as the Conference was determined to have *a constitutional* plan of separation, if any at all. The McFerrin-Spicer resolution was adopted.

Thursday, June 6, the "Protest of the Southern delegates against the action . . . in the case of Bishop Andrew" was read and spread upon the journal. It was written by Dr. Henry B. Bascom, the brilliant New Yorker by birth, Ohioan by spiritual birth, and Kentuckian by transfer, and is classed among the ablest public documents of the century. A perusal and prayerful, unbiased study of it by every Methodist would have joined us in heart, purpose, and love, in the bonds of peace years ago. (It may be found in "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," pp. 73-87.) This was signed by all Southern delegates except Clarke, of Texas; also by nine Northern delegates.

Drs. Olin, Durbin, and Hamline were appointed a committee to make a "reply" to this "protest." But as a "reply to a protest" was without precedent or warrant (since a minority has a constitutional right in all bodies to spread on the minutes a protest to any action, and that without reply, the action objected to being itself the answer for the majority), it was decided to call it a "statement of facts." This was presented June 10, the last day, and was principally arguments in advocacy of the line of policy originated and elaborated by Dr. Hamline and others during the long debates.

The bishops, not knowing just how to map out their work for the next years, since the acceptance of the views of the Hamline wing of the majority (that Bishop Andrew was "absolutely suspended") would bring them in conflict with the Durbin wing (that the action in Bishop Andrew's case was advisory only, leaving it to his sense of duty to carry out the will of the General Conference), asked for *official* instructions on three distinct points, which the Conference gave in a resolution of three sections:

"*Resolved:* 1. That Bishop Andrew's name stand in the Minutes, Hymn Book, and Discipline as formerly.

"2. That the rule in reference to the support of a bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew.

"3. That whether in any, and in what work Bishop Andrew be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action, in relation to the previous action of this Conference in his case."

The first two of the above resolutions were adopted by 155 to 17 and 152 to 14 votes, respectively. The third, which really was a reiteration of the former action, simply adding emphasis, was 103 to 67, some Northern members voting with the minority, South.

There were some rather warm speeches made by both sides, the day closing with the feeling that the next day was likely to prove a "Black Friday" in Episcopal Methodism, as the Select Committee of Nine was expected to bring in a report on the idea of a separation.

CHAPTER XII.

The "Plan" of Separation — Its Purpose — Explained by the Committee—Adopted.

By the last vote one wing of the minority regarded the action concerning Bishop Andrew as mandatory; the other wing, as simply advisory. "Up to the present time," wrote a historian many years ago, "not the smallest advance has been made toward any settled or agreed understanding on the part of the majority as to the true nature and intention of the action against Bishop Andrew." And the writer of this volume has not seen anything since to indicate a settled agreement by that majority, or its "heirs and assigns," the Methodist Episcopal Church (North), as to what was the intention of the action of that General Conference in the case.

On Friday, June 7, Dr. Paine, Chairman of the Select Committee of Nine, reported the following "Plan of Separation," the importance of which, both in its ecclesiastical and legal history, demands to be given in full:

"Whereas a declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with signatures of *fifty-one* of the delegates of the body from thirteen Annual Conferences in slaveholding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention

as not impossible, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

"*Resolved*, By the delegates of the several Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled:

"1. That should the Annual Conferences in slaveholding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection: All the societies, stations, and Conferences adhering to the Church in the South, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and Conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church, South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and Conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; provided, also, that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and Conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

"2. That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church may, as they prefer, remain in that Church, or, *without blame*, attach themselves to the Church, South.

"3. *Resolved*, By the delegates of all the Annual Conferences, in General Conference assembled, That we recommend to all the Annual Conferences at their ap-

proaching sessions, to authorize a change of the Sixth Restrictive Article, so that the first clause shall read thus: 'They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of the Chartered Fund, to any other purpose than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, and to such other purposes as shall be determined upon by the vote of two-thirds of all the members of the General Conference.'

"4. That whenever the Annual Conferences, by a vote of three-fourths of all their members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the Sixth Restrictive Article, the Agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to, deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church, South, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, Church members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church, and that said Agents also convey to the aforesaid agent or appointee of the [Church] South all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock, and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"5. That when the Annual Conferences shall have approved the aforesaid change in the Sixth Restrictive Article there shall be transferred to the above agent for the Southern Church so much of all capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with the notes, book accounts, presses, etc., men-

tioned in the last resolution, bear the same proportion to the whole property of said Book Concern that the traveling preachers in the Southern Church shall bear to all the traveling ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the division to be made on the basis of the number of traveling preachers in the forthcoming Minutes.

"6. That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of $25,000 per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern, and in Southern notes and accounts due the establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and until the payments are made, the Southern Church shall share in all the net profits of the Book Concern, in the proportion that the amount due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the Concern.

"7. That Nathan Bangs, of the New York Conference, George Peck, of the New York Conference, and James B. Finley, of the Ohio Conference, be, and they are hereby, appointed commissioners to act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the Southern organization (should one be formed) to estimate the amount which shall fall due to the South by the preceding rule, and to have full powers to carry into effect the whole arrangements proposed with regard to the division of property should the separation take place. And if by any means a vacancy occurs in this Board of Commissioners, the Book Committee at New York shall fill such vacancy.

"8. That whenever any agents of the Southern Church are clothed with legal authority or corporate power to act in the premises, the Agents at New York are hereby authorized and directed to act in concert

with said Southern agents, so as to give the provisions of these resolutions a legally binding force.

"9. That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meetinghouses, parsonages, colleges, schools, Conference funds, cemeteries, *and of every kind* in the limits of the Southern organization shall be *forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church*, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises.

"10. That the Church so formed in the South shall have a common right to use all the copyrights in possession of the Book Concerns at New York and Cincinnati at the time of the settlement by the Commissioners.

"11. That the Book Agents at New York be directed to make such compensation to the Conferences South, for their dividend from the Chartered Fund, as the Commissioners above provided for shall agree upon.

"12. That the bishops be respectfully requested to lay that part of this report requiring the action of the Annual Conferences before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New York Conference."

One who was present described the scene as painfully and impressively silent and solemn. For a few moments it appeared as if members were afraid to look at each other. All felt that a crisis was imminent—that the contingency provided for as a barely possible resort had, in reality, already come to the Church. Yet each dreaded to acknowledge it to the other.

On June 8 Dr. Elliott brought the plan before the Conference on a motion to adopt it. He explained its objects and purpose, and said such action was in-

evitable sooner or later—that it was not a schism, but a peaceful separation for mutually beneficial ends. Dr. N. Bangs said that when the choice of one or the other evils was imperative the least was the one to choose. He said the laws, discipline, doctrines, government, all would be the same, and they would be as warm in their affections toward each other as they were now. He referred to Mr. Wesley's course in setting American Methodism apart from the organization in England, and of the separate relation of the Church in Ireland because of the difference in civil institutions. He said:

"That is just what we want. The South asks a separate Conference, adapted to the institutions of that portion of the country. . . . I have been a traveling preacher forty-four years. I have gloried in the belief that the Methodist Episcopal Church was one. . . . I pray that the providence of God will overrule the present adverse circumstances for good; but if we must separate, is it right to deprive the brethren of the South of their just rights?"

Mr. Finley called attention to the fact that the Canadian Church had been authorized, if they saw fit, to set up a different Conference, and had done so (in 1828). The General Conference even authorized one of the bishops to ordain a bishop for them in case they elected one to the Canadian episcopacy. (Mr. Cartwright, of Illinois, here interrupted to say that the General Conference did not give the Canadian Conference any of the funds.) Drs. Bangs and Finley showed that the General Conference authorized the New York Conference to pay over to the Canadian Conference $10,000. "And we are now doing nothing more than we did then," concluded Dr. Finley.

Dr. Leonidas L. Hamline urged the justice of the proposed measure, and showed that the plan did not depend upon the proposed change in the Sixth Restrictive Article. He urged that if the brethren of the South felt that they must separate, they go as "beloved in the Lord," and "let us hear their voice responsive claiming us for brethren—let us go and preach Jesus to them, and they come and preach Jesus to us!" he exclaimed.

All the members of the Select Committee explained the plan, every speech going to show that it was never contemplated that the Plan of Separation was to depend upon the change of the Sixth Restrictive Article; but simply upon the determination of the Conferences in slaveholding States to take advantage of its provisions.

The first resolution in the Plan was adopted by a vote of 135 ayes to 15 nays, Mr. Peter Cartwright and Mr. A. Griffith being among the latter—they voting no on every one. The second resolution was adopted by a vote of 139 to 17; the third, by 147 to 10—being that relating to the change of the Sixth Restrictive Article; the fourth went logically with the third; the fifth was adopted by a vote of 153 to 13, all the others being adopted without division.

The practical unanimity with which the Plan was adopted is remarkable when we recall that it was a unique measure, and the far-reaching and never-ending importance it was considered to be. This fact proves that all was done on both sides with due regard to right and justice, and from a high sense of Christian character. A participant said: "Though it was an exciting and prolonged debate, very little bitterness was expressed, few harsh words uttered, and

scarcely any unchristian temper exhibited. Christian courtesy, dignity of manner, and brotherly forbearance were the characteristics of the speakers, for the most part."

Thus, by a practically unanimous vote, the General Conference of the whole Church authorized that portion of the Church in slaveholding States to separate and set up independently, if they deemed it better for themselves and for the whole Church.

CHAPTER XIII.

Caucus of Southern Delegates—Call for a Convention—Separation Under the Plan Declared Necessary—Proceedings of the Convention.

Immediately on the adjournment of the General Conference the Southern delegates (as such) issued an address signed by all except Mr. Clarke, of Texas. This address set forth in brief the status of affairs, and expressed the belief that continued unity and peace were impossible under one ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The address asked for a Convention to meet in Louisville, Ky., May 1, 1845. This paper was adopted by the Southern delegates in New York June 11, 1844—the next day after the General Conference had adjourned. Each delegate was to lay the address before his ensuing Annual Conference, together with the "Plan." In this meeting of Southern delegates were represented the following Annual Conferences: Kentucky, Missouri, Holston, Tennessee, North Carolina, Memphis, Arkansas, Virginia, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina.

The Kentucky Conference was the first to meet and act. It convened Wednesday, September 11, 1844, and appointed a committee the first thing to bring in a report on the subject of division. This committee reported the next day in a series of resolutions deploring the prospect of division, approved the holding of the Convention of delegates from the Annual Conferences in slaveholding States in Louisville the following May, as suggested by the address of the Southern delegates to the late General Conference on

their proposed basis of one delegate for every eleven members of each Conference; that the Southern and Southwestern Conferences shall not be regarded as seceding from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they shall be recognized in law, and to all intents and purposes, as a coördinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, simply acting under a separate jurisdiction; that the delegates from the Kentucky Conference be instructed *not to support any change in the Discipline of the Church;* that they deemed a division unavoidable unless assurances were given that the ministry and membership of the Church would be secure in their rights according to the Discipline, that there would be no further aggressions, and that reparation be made for past injury; that said Convention, in case a separation be agreed upon, be declared the General Conference of the Southern Church, with the same ratio of membership as is now provided for in the Restrictive Article on that subject (one for every twenty-one members of the Annual Conference); that the bishops of the Church, who may feel so disposed, are invited to be present; that the Friday before the assembling of the Convention be observed "throughout the Kentucky Conference as a day of fasting and prayer for the blessings of Almighty God on the Convention."

All the other Conferences in slaveholding States passed similar resolutions with singular and striking unanimity. A marked feature of all was the disavowal of secession, a positive prohibition of any change in the Discipline excepting only such verbal changes as would be necessary to form a separate jurisdiction in case the latter be deemed indispensable, and the general approval of the course of the bishops, and invit-

ing them to be present at the Convention in Louisville. (Bear in mind that the approval of the course of *all* the bishops was nearly thirty years before the "reasons" for Bishop Hedding withdrawing his name from the "Bishops' Compromise" were known to the South, or to any one else except those in the secret of that memorable caucus, as made known by Dr. Porter. See Chapter XI.)

It must not be supposed that these Conferences all acted without unkind words and violent expressions on the part of any one. Much bitterness was expressed and many harsh things uttered—even the honor and integrity of the Northern portion of the Church were impeached by many. But these were the violent outbreaks of undisciplined individuals, and of such a character that no honest, reasonable person would charge them as being representative of the sentiments of the Church, South. It is worthy of special note, in this connection, that such sentiments were never expressed by her leading men either in speech or print, nor were they ever permitted to become the action or expression of any Southern Conference. Nor can the writer find where any Conference in the South ever adopted any paper or utterance against the Northern Conferences' actions, or even a Northern disapproval of Southern action except where such things had the sanction of a majority vote in a Northern Conference to justify its being received as the true sentiment of the Northern membership as represented by such Conference in condemning the Southern portion of the Church. And no word or paper ever went forth from a Southern Conference condemning Church authorities, or expressing a disregard for any law or rule passed by the General Conference.

Well would it be if a truthful history could be written saying this represented the actions and attitude of the majority. It would be equally unjust and unchristian to charge upon the Northern portion of the Church responsibility for the intemperate and distempered harshness of individuals impugning the honor and veracity of Southern members. But many Conferences in the North took such actions by sweeping majorities as made such charges directly as well as indirectly. Yet, it is a cheerful thing to be able to record that even such expressions by majorities in many of those Conferences did not represent the real sentiments of a great Christian Church. They only served to remind us, in humility, that human nature is the same everywhere; that the power coming from the conscious strength of mere numbers will always prove dangerous whenever there is the aggressive contention of opposing methods of interpreting and carrying out a flexible principle of expediency. Some one has spoken of "the triumphs of brutal majorities." Churches are not exempt from the implied danger.

So the young student should not be too easily led into the dangerous path along which so many have lost their way in searching for historical truth: the fallacy that the action and position taken by a majority are necessarily the right ones. In this narrow path lies the rock over which so many have stumbled and which caused all our troubles. The Northern portion of the Church was not all wrong, even though many of its individual members could not see how their Southern brethren could differ with them (even having the plain letter and spirit of the law with them) and still be Christians. The Southern portion of the Church (though a minority of American Episcopal

Methodism) was not all wrong, even though some of its members met the opposition of the Northern majority with the unbrotherly charges of untruthful and dishonorable conduct. Both sides uttered words, and even committed them to the cold and enduring sentences of deliberate print, which their calmer moments disapproved—and many of their brethren then disavowed in heart and voice—and have ever afterwards regretted. Still, it is a fact of history that almost unanimously the Southern Conferences, in marvelous contrast to their Northern brethren, for the most part, sought, and expressed belief in, the most charitable motives for the actions and utterances of their Northern brethren.

The Convention met in Louisville Thursday, May 1, 1845, being called to order by Dr. William Capers, of South Carolina, at 9 A.M. The venerable Dr. Lovick Pierce was chosen temporary President, and Dr. Thomas N. Ralston, of Kentucky, temporary Secretary. In addition to the Conferences represented in the caucus of delegates making the call in New York, Florida and the Indian Mission Conferences sent delegates, those Conferences having passed resolutions similar to those by the other Southern and Southwestern Conferences. As many of the delegates were, or became, men of world-wide reputation for ability, learning, and spiritual force, a list of them ought to be preserved, as they stand as a guarantee of the fairness and high intellectual and Christian character of that Convention, and of the truth of the claims of the great coördinate branch of our common Episcopal Methodism which they erected into a separate jurisdiction. The list of delegates by Conferences was:

Kentucky.—Henry B. Bascom, Edward Stevenson,

Hubbard H. Kavanaugh, Benjamin T. Crouch, William Gunn, George W. Taylor, George W. Brush, John C. Harrison, Burr H. McCown, James King, John James, Thomas N. Ralston.

Missouri.—Andrew Monroe, Jesse Green, John Glanville, Wesley Browning, William Patton, John H. Lynn, Joseph Boyle, Thomas Johnson.

Holston.—Thomas K. Catlett, Thomas Stringfield, Rufus M. Stevens, Timothy Sullins, Creed Fulton.

Tennessee.—Robert Paine, John B. McFerrin, Alexander L. P. Green, Fountain E. Pitts, Ambrose F. Driskill, John W. Hanner, Joshua Boucher, Thomas Maddin, Frederick G. Furguson, Robert L. Andrews.

North Carolina.—Samuel L. Bryant, Hezekiah G. Leigh, Bennett T. Blake, Robert J. Carson, Peter Daub, John T. Brame.

Memphis.—Moses Brock, George W. D. Harris, William McMahon, Thomas Joyner, Asbury Davidson, Wilson L. McAlister, Thomas Smith.

Arkansas.—John Harrell, John F. Truslow.

Virginia.—John Early, Thomas Crowder, William A. Smith, Leroy M. Lee, Abraham Penn, David S. Doggett, Henry P. Cowles, Anthony Dibrell.

Mississippi. — Lowell Campbell, William Winans, Benjamin M. Drake, Samuel W. Speer.

Texas.—Littleton Fowler, Francis Wilson, Robert Alexander.

Alabama.—Jefferson Hamilton, Jesse Boring, Thomas H. Capers, Eugene V. Lovert, Elisha Calloway, Thomas O. Summers, Greenbury Garrett.

Georgia.—Lovick Pierce, James E. Evans, John W. Glenn, Samuel Anthony, Thomas Sanford, Augustus B. Longstreet, Isaac Boring, James B. Payne, George F. Pierce.

South Carolina.—William Capers, William M. Wightman, Hugh A. C. Walker, Samuel Dunwody, Boyd English, Samuel W. Capers.

Florida.—Peyton P. Smith, Thomas C. Benning.

Indian Mission.—Edward T. Peery, David B. Cumming.

Thomas O. Summers was elected permanent Secretary, and a resolution passed by a unanimous rising vote that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church then in attendance (Bishops Soule and Andrew) be invited to preside over the Convention under such arrangements as they might make. Bishop Soule informed the Convention that he would reply on the next day, expressing the views of himself and his colleague. This he did next morning, asserting that he felt that, under the terms of the constitution (he had written the constitution), separation was necessary and inevitable. On this he would stand, and could never be driven from it as long as matters were as they existed.

Resolutions were unanimously adopted instructing the Committee on Organization to ascertain if there were even a possibility of continued unity of the whole Church under the General Conference without the ruin of Methodism in the South; that they be instructed to leave a way open, if division shall be deemed necessary, for a reunion on terms which shall not compromise the interests of the Southern but which shall meet, as far as possible, the views of the Northern portion of the Church. The Committee on Organization, to whom this entire question was referred, was composed of two members from each of the fifteen Annual Conferences represented, and contained such men as Dr. Lovick Pierce, Dr. A. B. Longstreet, Dr. H. B.

Bascom, Dr. Robert Paine, Dr. W. A. Smith, Dr. Fountain E. Pitts, Dr. John Early, Dr. William Winans, Dr. Jesse Boring, Dr. William Capers, Dr. William M. Wightman, and Littleton Fowler.

Dr. Bascom, chairman of the committee, read their elaborate report on Thursday, May 15. On the 17th it was taken up and the first section, declaring the necessity of a separate jurisdiction in slaveholding territory, as provided for in the provisional "Plan of Separation," but without any change (except the necessary verbal alterations) in the Discipline, and naming the proposed branch of the Church Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was adopted by a vote of 94 to 3—William Gunn, George W. Taylor, and John C. Harrison voting no.

The second section provided for, and expressed an earnest desire for, a union with the other branch (North) on any plan they might propose that would recognize the rights of the Southern brethren under the law, such a plan to be welcomed whether it proposed jurisdictional or connectional union. This was unanimously adopted.

It was provided that any societies or stations on border lines should be taken into any Annual Conference of the new branch whenever they should so request agreeably to the Plan of Separation; also that the first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, should meet in Petersburg, Va., May 1, 1846, and thenceforward in April or May once in four years, etc., on a basis of one delegate for every fourteen members of an Annual Conference, instead of one for each twenty-one, as provided when there was only one General Conference for all of American Episcopal Methodists. Provision was made for sys-

tematically carrying out all the interests of the Church until the meeting of the General Conference, especially missions among the negroes—which had originated with, and had heretofore been carried on exclusively by, ministers and members and means of the South. Let this fact be kept in mind, as on it hinges most of the occasion of the continued separation of the two branches of Episcopal Methodism. Galatians ii. 1-10 was cited as the apostolic parallel to the present separation—now, as then, undoubtedly dictated by the Holy Spirit.

This Convention recited the paucity of obtainable data on which to write a fair, complete history of American Methodism, which accounted for the fact that no such history had been written; called attention to the vast importance this separation would assume as the years gathered themselves into periods, making this movement a momentous epoch in the history of Christianity; declaring it their conviction that the Convention ought not to adjourn without providing for writing and publishing a full account of everything leading up to and connected with the separation —as it would not be so written if that Convention did not provide therefor. The resolution made it obligatory in the writing of such a history, as stated in the paper, to "*Give the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth!*" even to every detail and the speeches of the late General Conference bearing on the question, together with the proceedings of the Annual Conferences in the South calling this Convention, and the proceedings of the latter, including the principal speeches. To accomplish this most important and arduous work, Drs. John B. McFerrin, Moses M. Henkle, Alexander L. P. Green, Fountain E. Pitts, and

John W. Hanner were appointed a committee in charge. That they did their work with almost unexampled fairness, impartiality, and completeness is shown by the fact that more space is given to speeches and papers by those opposing the Southern position than to those favoring. In no work coming to the writer's notice is such an unbiased account given, with so little comment or local coloring, as is presented in the work of that committee. By resolution of the Convention the work was published under the title, "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

The Convention extended invitations to Bishops Soule and Andrew to become bishops of the Southern branch of the Church. Bishop Soule replied that he felt bound to carry out the Episcopal Plan of Visitation during the year—but that, at the first session of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, he would feel fully authorized in uniting with them under the Plan of Separation. Bishop Andrew accepted the invitation. After adopting a lengthy "Pastoral Address," setting the whole question and facts before the Church, the Convention adjourned on Monday, May 19, with prayer by Dr. Early and the benediction by Bishop Soule.

CHAPTER XIV.

After the Convention—Opposition of Northern Editors—Nullification Resolutions—The Bishops' Action—Doubtful Conferences Join the South—Bishop Morris's Letter.

The practical unanimity and commendable Christian harmony prevailing in the Convention completely upset predictions and dissipated the hopes of those who seemed determined to overthrow the purpose of the spiritual unity intended to be maintained by the action of the General Conference in the Plan of Separation. By the very nature of the case the determination of the necessity of a separation belonged entirely with Annual Conferences in slaveholding territory—just where the General Conference placed it. Drs. Bond, Durbin, Elliott, and Peck had been bitter and untiring in creating a sentiment against action by the South. Driven from their predicted hopes, that there would be great diversity among Southern Methodists, by their almost unanimous action for separation (more than 95 in a hundred) as shown in the unity of the sixteen Annual Conferences composing the Convention, those brethren used their powerful pens in the four leading Church periodicals to charge insincerity on the Southern ministers, and to create a sentiment in favor of the nullification of the act of the General Conference. It was but natural to expect that many Southern preachers would retaliate in kind, both in speech and press. Thus much bitterness was expressed and unbrotherly feelings engendered on both sides. The raging torrent of passion served only to

widen and deepen the chasm on either side of which Episcopal Methodism was to be arrayed as divided hosts, brother against brother for two generations, and perhaps for a century.

But a majority of the Church papers were loyal to Methodistic law, upheld the action of the General Conference, and recognized the absolute right of the Annual Conferences in slaveholding States to act as the sole judges of their necessity in the premises. But while the larger number of papers edited by (and for) Methodists were loyal to authority, it is a fact that the leading and more powerful periodicals (in the North) succeeded in creating the general impression among the vast majority of members that the action of the South was a secession, "if not, indeed, a schism of the worst sort," as they put it; that those who adhered to the Southern branch would no longer be members of nor connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but with a "*proslavery Church,* the object of which is to strengthen slavery, and encourage and protect slaveholding in the ministry;" that if those in the South would adhere to the Northern division, all Church property in the South (purchased with the money and for the accommodation of members in the South) would fall into their hands, however few they might be; and assuring such that the North would supply them with preachers, giving the names of the Conferences within which they might reside to those who would thus hold them, no matter what their number.

Vituperation and harsh, unjust criticism of Bishop Soule for his declared intention to become a bishop of the Southern branch (if one should be formed) became widespread. He was declared to be "the chief instigator of the division. (Some of those who mis-

represented him were probably in the secret of the caucus of the New England conference that gave Bishop Hedding the "facts" which caused him to withdraw his name so suddenly from the "Bishops' Compromise.") Notwithstanding the law, and the language of the Plan, and that he was senior bishop, and had his visitations to make according to the Episcopal plan, Northern Annual Conferences were urged not to permit him to preside over them. To this extent did prejudice go in its angry desire to carry out the determination of those who felt safe behind the strength of superior numbers. Every principle and letter of the law on which they themselves relied, not only for ecclesiastical existence, but for rights and guarantees of protection, were ignored. For, be it known, that while Bishop Soule had work assigned him in Northern Conferences, two bishops—Morris and Janes—had work in the South. From this latter section came no authoritative or influential voice against these "Northern" bishops performing their duties under the law, until it became plain that Bishop Soule would not be permitted to preside over some Northern Conferences. And even then the question of the expediency of Bishops Morris and Janes presiding over Conferences denounced by the leading Northern Church papers and preachers as "seceders" was first raised by themselves, and not by the Southern people. Thus the Northern branch not only raised this question, but forced the issue on the unwilling and protesting Southern branch.

The bishops called a council to determine what to do. A crisis had been reached—or precipitated. To this council of bishops, Bishop Hamline sent his opinion in writing when it met in New York on Wednesday

July 2, 1845. Bishop Soule did not attend; and Bishop Andrew, being suspended (as he was, in fact, by the very necessities surrounding the late action in his case), was not invited to attend! Bishops Hedding, Waugh, Morris, and Janes agreed on a new plan of visitation, *excluding the Southern portion of the Church*, but did not change or interfere with Bishop Soule's appointments to preside over Northern Conferences—but provided that if he desired to be released from them Bishop Morris would attend to them! In addition to the above, the bishops adopted and sent out resolutions to the effect that the "Plan reported by the Select Committee of Nine at the last General Conference and adopted by that body in regard to a distinct ecclesiastical connection," etc., was regarded "as of binding obligation" as far as their administration was concerned; also, providing for ascertaining the full desire of border Conferences as to which division they would choose.

This latter action proved a great pacificator, as the vast majority of members, preachers, and papers were content to wait until the Conferences interested had spoken. Conspicuous exceptions to this were the Ohio and the North Ohio Conferences. Both declared the act of the General Conference unconstitutional; both said that they found no necessity for the separation (though the Plan properly constituted the Southern Conferences the sole judges as to such necessity). The Illinois Conference adopted similar resolutions, and went farther and declared the Annual Conferences the sole judges of the constitutionality of any act of the General Conference because it elected the delegates that constituted the General Conference!

Bishop Soule happening to be in Cincinnati when

the Ohio Conference met, September 3, 1845, Bishop Hamline, who was to preside, extending the courtesy due to the senior bishop of the Church, invited him to preside over the opening session. After conducting the usual religious services the venerable bishop was about to call for the regular business when the proceedings were broken into by Rev. Jacob Young, an aged preacher, who offered a resolution stating that Bishop Soule's declared willingness to become a bishop of the Southern division (should one be formed) had severed his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and declaring it inexpedient and highly improper for him to preside over any Conference in the Methodist Episcopal Church!

Its reading caused a sensation, and consternation is said to have seized on the members for a moment. Bishop Soule was said to have been the only calm one in the body. He stated that as he was there presiding at the special invitation of Bishop Hamline, and not of his own seeking, he could not put such a resolution before them without becoming a party to the gross disrespect it offered to their presiding officer. Bishop Hamline called a member of the Conference to the chair as the best relief to his own embarrassing position; but the tumult and disorder became so great that he had to himself resume the chair, and he put the obnoxious resolution. It was carried by a vote of 145 to 7.

To counterbalance the nullification resolutions brought into this Conference, eight members brought in a series of six resolutions which deserve a place in the history of Methodism. They took the ground that the General Conference is the supreme judicial and legislative body, the high court of appeals of the

Church; that the bishops are the highest executive authority in the interval of a General Conference, and they had declared the Plan as a binding obligation and were determined to regulate their administration accordingly; that in adopting the nullification resolutions this Conference acted on the false assumption that it had power to nullify an act of the General Conference, whereas the General Conference is the sole judge of the constitutionality of its own acts; that the General Conference provided for the peaceful separation of the Conferences in the slaveholding States if the latter deemed a separation necessary, and the Southern Conferences have arranged for the separation according to the strict terms of the Plan; that inasmuch as said Plan was authorized by the legal representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church in General Conference assembled, representing the entire Church in every State, no subsequent General Conference can repeal said act or annul said Plan, because such a General Conference, representing all the parties interested, will never convene again, nor can either General Conference, North or South, disregard or set aside the provisions of the Plan, because it originated in mutual concessions and compromise, and now partakes of the nature of a treaty or compact which neither party can violate without a breach of good faith; that the nullification resolution is unconstitutional, revolutionary, and subversive of the fundamental principles involved in the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These resolutions were signed by J. A. Waterman, S. A. Latta, William Burke, G. W. Maley, Isaac Ebbert, E. W. Sehon (all of whom subsequently went over to the Southern branch), and Samuel Black and J. B. Ellsworth. The resolutions

were not only rejected by all the other members, but they were refused a place in the official Church organ!

The South and the North were alike aflame, the latter, through its superior numbers and great periodicals, having much the advantage in creating sentiment and making its views known. Many members in the North went so far as to refuse to pay their proportion of salary due Bishops Soule and Andrew, while the South was cheerfully paying their proportion of five Northern bishops! It was a sad time—a period that made good men on both sides weep and pray much, and deplore and implore regarding the unchristian spirit manifested in all sections.

Contrary to what had been set forth in the Church papers as almost sure to occur, the Kentucky, the Missouri, the Holston, and the Tennessee Conferences adhered to the Southern branch by an almost unanimous vote in each—the first by a vote of 77 to 6, the second giving only fourteen opposing votes, the third giving only one negative vote, and the last being unanimous for it—an average of over ninety-five per cent in favor of the South in the four Conferences where divisions and strifes were predicted by the Northern and feared by the Southern branch.

It was in the confident hope that a Conference would be maintained in Missouri by opponents of the Plan that Bishop Morris was addressed by letter urging him to come down and preside over them—or over those who would adhere to the North. This he refused to do in a letter breathing loyalty to the Church, and expressing the unalterable determination to maintain, in good faith, the letter and the spirit of the Plan. He told them plainly that their suggestion that the part of the Missouri Conference over which he was

asked to preside so it could draw from the Book Concern as the true Missouri Conference would be doing exactly what the General Conference designed in good faith and in Christian fairness to prevent. He added:

"But if any brethren suppose the bishops will send preachers from the North to interior charges South, or to minorities of border charges, to produce disruption, or that they will encourage minority preachers on either side of the line to organize opposition lines, by establishing one Conference within the lines of another, *they are misled.* That would be *departing from the plain letter of the rule* prescribed by the General Conference in the premises. *Editors may teach such multiplication,* and answer for it, if they will [if any editor was ever called to answer for such things the record of it has entirely escaped a vigilant search by the writer]; but the bishops all understood their duty better than to indorse such principles. . . . *If the Plan of Separation had been carried out in good faith* and Christian feeling on both sides, it would scarcely have been felt any more than the division of an Annual Conference. It need not destroy confidence or embarrass the work, if the business be managed in the spirit of Christ. I trust that the time is not very far distant when brethren, North and South, will cease their hostilities and betake themselves to their prayers and other appropriate duties in earnest."

CHAPTER XV.

TWO METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCHES—SOUTHERN FRATERNAL DELEGATE IGNORED BY THE NORTHERN BRANCH—THE CHURCH NORTH REFUSES TO MAKE DIVISION OF PROPERTY—REPUDIATES THE PLAN OF SEPARATION—SWEEPING DECISION IN FAVOR OF THE CHURCH, SOUTH, BY THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES.

THOUGH nominally existing before, the real beginning of two Methodist Episcopal Churches in the United States (or more properly speaking, of two equal, coördinate branches of that Church) was with the organization of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on Friday, May 1, 1846, at Petersburg, Va. Not the least remarkable thing about the organization of the new jurisdictional connection was that it adopted identically the same clauses in the Discipline—the General Rule and the laws of 1816, 1836, and 1840—concerning slavery that were in that little book of laws before the separation, and the interpretations of which, from different points of view, had caused the division. It would be a difficult task for a man possessed of ordinary powers of mind, in connection with a Christian conscience, to reconcile this significant fact with what a vast majority of Methodists in America have been taught to believe was the real motive that actuated Methodists in slaveholding States in their separation from their Northern brethren in Church government. It must appear to any reasoning mind at this late day to be a willful blindness that refuses to see that slavery was

not the cause—even remotely—but only the occasion, of the separation.

On the second day of the session the senior bishop of American Methodism, Joshua Soule, sent a letter to the Conference announcing his adherence to the Southern branch of the Church, and he was unanimously received and recognized as a bishop, Bishop Andrew being recognized at the same time. Dr. John Early, of Virginia, was appointed Book Agent. A *Review* was ordered published, with Dr. Bascom editor; a constitution for the Church Missionary Society was adopted, and the China Mission established at Shanghai—at least provision was made therefor. Dr. Thomas O. Summers was elected Sunday School Editor, and directed to revise and publish an edition of the hymn book; Dr. William Capers, of South Carolina, "father of missions among the negroes," and Rev. Robert Paine, of Alabama, a great educator, were elected and ordained bishops, and Dr. Lovick Pierce, of Georgia, was elected the first fraternal delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North), to meet in Pittsburg in May, 1848.

Most of the members of both branches thought they saw the beginning of peace, and gladly hailed its coming. But astute men on either side saw portentous clouds gathering from the actions and utterances of Northern Conferences in their selections of delegates to the General Conference of that Church for 1848. These clouds were rolling up blacker and thicker every day—ominous of a coming storm. Amid the gathering darkness the hurricane howled down upon the delegates at Pittsburg as soon as the Conference was organized, Wednesday, May 3, 1848.

Repudiation, nullification of its own acts, denunciation of all who expressed an opinion contrary to their own, and the twisting together of prejudices and threatenings into a scourge to lash Southern Methodists into returning to the conditions prior to 1844 appeared to be the only purposes that brought the majority of that Conference to Pittsburg. They seem to have been elected on a pledge to insist on all of these things. So intent were they on carrying out these ideas that they appeared to have no regard for law, justice, and honorable agreements and Christian concessions made in the interest of brotherly compromise. The action of the majority indicated that a general madness had seized on them, manifesting itself in a repudiation of everything concerning their Southern brethren which should have had Christian acquiescence, or kindly difference of opinion in love. In this repudiating spirit they refused to receive Dr. Lovick Pierce as a fraternal delegate, ignoring the Southern Church altogether, but inviting him to attend the Conference—which any person could do, since Methodists never have held Conferences with closed doors, nor held any "executive sessions." Dr. Pierce declined, of course, adding these memorable words in his reply to the General Conference:

"You will therefore regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if ever made upon the basis of the 'Plan of Separation' as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Methodist

Episcopal Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition."

This action was but the necessary prelude to the final and supreme act of repudiation—the refusal to recognize the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as having any rights at all, or even an existence. Of course the Conference absolutely refused a division of the publishing interests or other property, and arranged to take charge of and hold such exclusively for the Northern branch.

This left the Southern branch but one thing to do: "To appeal to Cæsar," as Bishop McTyeire forcibly puts it. Actual facts are unchanging verities; but the heated minds, the rancor, the bitter, revolutionary period gave such color to them as made them appear irreconcilably different to the North to what they did to the South. Politicians were not slow to take advantage of the willingness many ministers of the Northern branch showed to make their pulpits rostrums from which to declare and urge partisan political questions and principles. So purely partisan politics had a powerful influence in shaping the disastrous results that followed. This General Conference was made up very largely of new members—elected in th heat of revolutionary passion for a definite purpose: to prevent, if possible, the South from taking advantage of the Plan permitting her to depart in peace. Only one conclusion can be drawn from the utterances and actions of the majority: They would have agreed to let peace reign if the Plan had been regarded as a merely verbal measure to which all might point and say: "You see our magnanimity, our Christian liberality!" But when the South acted on it in good faith,

wrath was stirred up that she had accepted her legal and just right to depart by departing.

As we have seen, the South was practically a unit. Not so with the North. The only question the Annual Conferences could vote on pertaining to the matter was that recommending the change in the Sixth Restrictive Article—for a division of the common property. Many Northern members did not approve of the attitude in which the majority had put the South; the majority of them, however, aided by the editors referred to by Bishop Morris's letter, did not like the terms agreed on, saying they were too liberal to the South! The votes in the Annual Conferences on the change of the Sixth Restrictive Article resulted as follows: For the change, 1,164 in the Northern Conferences and 971 in the Southern; opposing the change, 1,070 in the Northern, none in the Southern. This was a majority of Northern votes in favor, and, with the South, almost two-thirds, but not the necessary three-fourths. It must not be entertained for a moment that this opposing vote of 1,070 indicated that this large number of ministers in the Northern Annual Conferences were insincere or bigoted, nor that they were actuated by any disloyal or unjust motives. Many of them honestly desired the unity of Methodism, and thought a chance yet remained to keep together; many others were blind (or designedly misled) to the legal aspect of the case as set forth by the six members of the Ohio Conference in their resolutions of protest, and honestly believed that by defeating the change of this Article they could thereby defeat the Plan and keep the South. Others believed that by defeating the proposed change they could force the Southern Church to secede. But, while the

majority of those voting for nonconcurrence undoubtedly hoped to heal the breach and save division, the politicians did not propose to permit peace if possible to keep up strife. Along the border lines there was much friction and bitterness—even outrages. Both sides were at fault, and both suffered for the wrongs put upon them "in the house of their friends." And the severe and scathing review of the actions and utterances of some Northern Annual Conferences by Southern assemblies from time to time during the discussion of the votes had but served to make hotter the fierce flames of wrath in the North.

It was out of such conditions that the delegates to this memorable General Conference were elected. The wise and conservative members of both sides were prepared, under such circumstances, for the storm and repudiating acts that followed the assembling of the Conference. Says Dr. Myers in his "Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church:"

"It may be gratifying to Methodists of the present generation to know that there were but few who, in 1844, voted for the Plan that, in 1848, repudiated it. On the rescinding resolution there were 142 votes—132 ayes, 10 nays. Of the voters, 41 were at the Conference of 1844; of the 41 there, 11 had voted agains the Plan; of the 30 remaining, 5 voted against repudiation; leaving but 25 out of the 132 ayes who repudiated their own action of 1844. . . . While it shows tha even good men may mistake policy for principle, it does not make repudiation righteous."

It followed, as a logical sequence, that the commissioners from the Southern branch, who reported ready to adjust all matters pertaining to a division of the property, were sent back with the reply that there was

no division to adjust. This left the South only the last resort mentioned above: suits were brought in 1849 in the United States Circuit Courts of New York and of Ohio praying for the *pro rata* division of the common property in the city of New York and in Cincinnati. The New York court gave a decision in favor of the Church, South; the court in Cincinnati rendered an adverse decision. This was taken on an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. The object of the Southern branch of the Church was more to settle the question of her ecclesiastical position, name, and rights—her moral vindication before the world—than for the pecuniary interests involved.

In 1854 the Supreme Court rendered its decision. It was on Tuesday, April 25, that a full bench of eight justices (Justice John MacLean, having already expressed an opinion as a Methodist, declined to sit on the case) handed down a unanimous decision, reversing the judgment of the Ohio court. The decision was most sweeping—enforcing the Plan of Separation in all of its provisions, and in every particular. By it all debts due by persons residing within the limits of the Southern Annual Conferences were transferred to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; it was to hold, control, and own the publishing interests at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, and in addition was to receive $270,000 in cash, the Northern division paying the costs of the suit.

CHAPTER XVI.

No "Original" Methodist Episcopal Church—Two Co-ordinate Branches—Question Settled by Supreme Court Decision.

The decision of the Supreme Court, far from settling the difficulties (except as to rendering just property dues to the Southern branch) had the opposite effect. The humiliating thing about it all was that the majority seemed to feel as do bees when the one who has furnished them the flowers and fields from which to make honey takes some of it for his own use. Feeling compelled to bow to the mandates of the court in material things, the Northern branch seemed determined to disregard the moral intentions and effects of the decision—the very things the South contended for. They insisted that the Northern branch was the original Methodist Episcopal Church; that the Southern branch had gone out from them—had seceded; that the Northern alone was entitled to the name of Methodist Episcopal Church. Preachers and periodicals and books set about fixing these misrepresentations in the minds of the people. And such terms were applied to the Northern branch as "the Original Church," "the Old Mother Methodist Church," etc. These terms were almost invariably used in all public references to the two branches, and became the standard methods of her representative writers and speakers in asserting that the Church, South, was illegitimate, and had no claim nor part in original Episcopal Methodism. And this misrepresentation was so general and persistent that it is safe

to say more than seven in ten of all Methodists to-day either believe it, or else know so little of the facts as to be unable to deny it.

One of the most impartial historians of Methodism, in his "Story of Methodism," published in New York in 1888, acknowledges on one page that the Church, South, is coördinate and equal with the Church North as a part of original American Episcopal Methodism, and on other pages seems to break loose from the ecclesiastical and authoritative nomenclature of the branch he represents; and the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) is called "The Mother Church," "The Parent Church," "De Ole John Wesley Chu'ch"—the latter in making the claim to being the only Church caring or doing, or capable of doing, anything for the Christianizing and higher instruction of the negroes. ("Story of Methodism," by A. B. Hyde, D.D., Professor of Greek in Denver University; Member of American Philological Association, of American Society of Biblical Exegesis, of Summer School of Philosophy, etc.; lately Professor of Biblical Literature, Allegheny College, Pa.: pp. 539, 540, 542, 544, 550, 673, 682.)

One important fact ought to be borne in mind in making up a judgment regarding this misrepresentation as to the position, name, and rights of the Southern branch. It has been charged by the South that the members of the Northern branch have been willful in thus perverting the truth. Color is given to this because for almost sixty years it has gone on persistently, and practically uncorrected, by all the periodicals and nearly all the preachers and speakers of the Northern branch, as well as by the secular press of the North and by politicians. But the people at

large never had the facts. This is as true of the South as of the North. The habit of one-sidedness is hard to shake off. The mass of the people get their information from the Church periodical or from the secular daily or weekly press, not from books. And touching this matter there has been little written in books that was not hidden away in the mass of general Methodist history until recent years; and then only portions of the history of this most important matter were given, dealing with a specially interesting feature, or dramatic incident. So the people have not had access to the facts. The great organs and journals of the North have never given them; and the South had only a few locally circulated papers, and no great publishing institution, nor a single literary magazine.

The only way Methodists can arrive at the exact truth—unbiased and whole—concerning this phase of the question—which has been one of the most potent factors in keeping the chasm of separation wide and deep—is to know the legal facts and judgment regarding the division of property and the relative standing and position of each branch of the Church. In addition to what has been given of the decision of the Supreme Court, the needed facts will be best stated in the language of the decision itself. The court had before it the minutes of the Convention at Louisville in 1845, together with the journal of the General Conferences of 1844 and 1848 of the Northern branch, and of the first General Conference of the Southern branch, 1846. They also had the Discipline which was in force in 1844 (and which the Church, South, had not altered in law or doctrine). The ablest counsel in the country represented both sides; and, prompted by Dr. Jesse T. Peck, their great editor, and Dr. Nathan

Bangs, the historian, for the North; and by Dr. W. A. Smith and Dr. A. L. P. Green, for the South, the counsel and court became most thoroughly acquainted with Methodist Episcopal law, usage, and government. The decision recites:

"In the year 1844 the traveling preachers, in General Conference assembled, . . . agreed upon a plan for the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church in case the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding States should deem it necessary, and to the erection of two separate and distinct ecclesiastical organizations. . . . In the following year the Southern Annual Conferences met in Convention, in pursuance of the Plan of Separation, and determined upon a division, and resolved that the Annual Conferences should be constituted into a separate ecclesiastical connection, based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to be known by the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. . . . The division of the Church, as originally constituted, thus became complete; and from that time two separate and distinct organizations have taken the place of the one previously existing. . . . This argument [that the division was without proper authority, and that the Southern claimants had forfeited their rights by now belonging to another Church], if it proves anything, proves too much; for, if sound, the necessary consequence is that the beneficiaries, North as well as South, have forfeited the right to the fund. It can no more be affirmed, either in point of fact or of law, that they are "traveling preachers" in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, as originally constituted, since the division, than of those in connection with the Church, South. . . . Their [Methodist Episcopal

Church, North] General Conference is not the General Conference of the old Church, nor does it represent the interest, or possess territorially the same; nor are they the body under whose care this fund was placed by its founders. It may be admitted that, within the restricted limits, the organization and authority are the same as the former Church; but the same is equally true of the Church, South. If the division under the direction of the General Conference has been made without proper authority, and for that reason the traveling preachers within the Southern division are wrongfully separated from their connection with the Church, and thereby have lost the character of beneficiaries, those within the Northern division are equally wrongfully separated from that connection, as both have been brought into existence by the same authority. But we do not agree that this division was made without proper authority. On the contrary, we entertain no doubt but that the General Conference of 1844 was competent to make it; and that each division of the Church, under the separate organization, is just as legitimate, and can claim as high a sanction, ecclesiastical and temporal, as the Methodist Episcopal Church first founded in the United States. The authority which founded that Church in 1784 has divided it, and established two separate and independent organizations, occupying the place of the old. . . . The change of this Article (Sixth) was not made a condition of the division. That depended alone upon the decision of the Southern Conferences. The division of the Methodist Episcopal Church having taken place, in pursuance of the proper authority, it carried with it, as matter of law, a division of the common property belonging to the ec-

clesiastical organization, and especially of the property in this Book Concern, which belonged to the traveling preachers. . . . As a division of the common property followed, as matter of law, a division of the Church organization, nothing short of an agreement and stipulation of the Church, South, to give up their share of it could preclude the assertion of their right, and it is quite clear no such agreement or stipulation is found in the Plan of Separation. . . . Without pursuing the case any further, our conclusion is that the complainants and those they represent are entitled to their share of the property in this Book Concern; and the proper decree will be entered to carry this decision into effect."

It will be seen that this decision settled, as far as truth and justice, perfectly determined in a given case, can determine any question having to do with erring man. The General Conference of all the Churches had full power and authority to provide for the division of Episcopal Methodism into two branches; the original Church was henceforth composed of two branches instead of one, and would be so composed until one or both departed from the law and doctrines under which the organization of the original Church existed; that neither of the two branches was henceforth the "original Church," nor could either henceforth truthfully claim to be such, nor be entitled to call itself "The Old Methodist Episcopal Church," "The Mother Church," etc.

CHAPTER XVII.

PRINCIPLES THAT KEEP THE TWO BRANCHES APART —POLITICAL METHODS IN THE CHURCH NOT ACCORDING TO THE GOSPEL PLAN—STATUS OF THE BISHOPS—VIOLATIONS OF THE PLAN—IGNORING THE SOUTH.

To charge that the Southern branch is opposed to the Northern because of the position occupied during the civil war is untrue in every particular. The position that each branch occupied during the civil war was both natural and logical. It was to be expected from the very purpose of the Plan of Separation itself. And each side was right, as a Church, in the position it took as long as it did not stoop to mere political and demagogical methods. If Christ and the apostles taught anything with clearness regarding man's duty to his fellow-man, it was that his Church should be subject to the laws of the country in which it existed. In this spirit history will show that it was the Southern branch that took high, New Testament ground on this question, and has ever planted herself on it, in spirit and in truth, and not in mere profession. But she believed, and held, that no duty, not even "the circumstance of war," demanded a Church to adopt unjust or unkind methods toward any one. To her it is both scriptural and in accordance with the traditions of the Church to pray for those in authority, and to maintain the laws of the land where she has existence and labors for the salvation of the people. But nowhere have I found record, nor a person who ever heard, of a Southern Methodist preach-

er during the late war praying for God's smiting power to fall upon the people of the North. Nor can an instance be cited, as far as diligent and conscientious search has been able to reveal, where any person in authority or minister of any Southern Conference sanctioned, or profited by, the forcible ejection of a preacher of the North from any pulpit where he was legally and rightfully appointed to preach. And it is confidently asserted that no preacher of the Southern branch has ever preached from a Southern Methodist pulpit touching any phase of a political question not more moral and religious than merely civil—such as the liquor question, peace between nations, etc.—without being silenced unless he would promise to "mend his ways." While neither branch of the Church has passed any special law forbidding such practices, it is as well understood as if contained in the constitution of Methodism that no such preaching would be tolerated in the Southern Church. The mistaken and overzealous preacher who, now and then in the early days of excitement, essayed to do so as an offset to what he saw brother preachers in the Northern branch doing, soon found himself without a congregation, and his stewards promptly discharged that part of their duty requiring them to "tell the preachers what they think wrong in them."

During the civil war, not only preachers of the Northern branch, but her officials and bishops, took forcible possession of churches belonging to the Southern Church, and held them until compelled to give them up. November 30, 1863, Secretary of War Stanton gave to Bishop Ames, of the Northern Church, a letter, which was in reality an order, to al military commanders of the United States army, to

displace from every house of worship belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, any preacher who may not have been appointed thereto by a loyal bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North), and that all such houses of worship are "hereby placed at the disposal of the Rev. Bishop Ames." It will be noted that this not only placed property belonging to the Church, South, at the arbitrary disposal of a bishop of the Northern branch, in disobedience of the plain law of the Church making the separation, but it made the United States discriminate in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) against other "loyal" denominations. The reason is easily found: No other Church, not even the Roman Catholic, ever showed any disposition in such times to thus profit in the name of Christ at the expense of another Church. This is the plain fact, deplorable and unscriptural as it appears at the present day. Bishop Ames was not slow to avail himself of this "order." He came on down South with the invading Northern army, and found Gen. Banks at New Orleans cheerfully ready to carry it into full force, as the order asked that Bishop Ames and his clerk be given transportation and subsistence, and that all "commanding officers at the various points where such houses of worship may be located are directed to extend to the ministers that may be appointed by Bishop Ames to conduct divine service in said houses of worship all the aid, countenance, and support practicable in the execution of their mission."

Such a man as Gen. Butler (who preceded Gen. Banks in New Orleans), in his capacity as a military ruler, may forbid a preacher not of his political way of thinking to preach or pray because, according to the

language of Butler's inhibition of Southern Methodist preachers, "it is calculated to fire the Southern heart and encourage the Confederacy," and not lay himself liable to Christian censure as such. But not so the bishop of a great Christian Church. Bishop Ames, acting under Gen. Butler's idea, and by order of Gen. Banks (see Special Order No. 15, Department of the Gulf, January 18, 1864), filled the Southern Methodist Churches in New Orleans with Northern preachers. He appointed to Carondelet Street Church, in New Orleans, Dr. John Philip Newman, who was to be over all the Churches there. Dr. Hyde, who cannot keep out of his almost impartial history ("The Story of Methodism") such untruthful terms as "War of the Rebellion," says, "So came the Northern Church again into the South;" and says that Dr. Newman was sent to New Orleans to "look after the Churches which the fortunes of war had thrown in the Bishop's [Ames's] hands." The argument made in defense of this is that otherwise these Churches would have been without preaching. In other words, the War Department was induced to forbid Southern preachers using their own churches so as to leave them empty that they might be filled with Northern preachers in order that they should not go without preachers! And Dr. Newman had to be ousted ungracefully from this church a year after the war had closed—and barely in time for the General Conference of the Southern branch to be held in it in May, 1866. Thus did political practices creep into a great Church (as a logical sequence of her self-forced position in adopting the practice of "expediency") and put her into open and deliberate repudiation of the law of a Supreme Department of the very government to which it was professing loyalty under direction of

a subordinate branch of that same government! In writing of these things it would take the genius of a Cicero to rightly tell of them under his text: "O tempora! O mores!" And to defend (?) them by saying it was a necessity under the circumstances is but another way of putting the liquor dealer's defense of his trade: "If I don't sell it, some one else will."

Another great difference that yet divides the two branches is that of the attitude of the bishops of the whole Church. The South holds, as she always did (and as did Bishop Soule, who wrote the constitution of the Church in accordance with what was the spirit, intention, and practice of the whole body of preachers at the time), that a bishop was, by his ordination especially to that office, to be what the very name implies—an overseer, and of the whole Church. So a bishop could not be a mere creature of the General Conference; that, once elected and ordained, he could not be removed, nor even censured, without a regular trial on complaint and showing of having been guilty of a violation of law. In order to be consistent in the position she took when Bishop Andrew was immolated on the stone of "expediency" in answer to the clamorous demands of some who would put sentimentality above law, the Northern branch has had to keep her bishops under that equivocal dread, the whim of the mere majority. As the Romans put a slave on the laurel-wreathed car of a conquering general, to whom a triumphal march through the city was granted, to whisper in his ear constantly, "Remember that you are but mortal," so the proceedings of the Northern General Conferences show that our brethren in that

branch constantly remind their bishops that they are but servants of the General Conference—"lest they forget, lest they forget!" Until this is changed, there can be no one single branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States. The South and the North can never come together until this attitude is changed.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Real Attitude of Both Branches toward the Negro — Better Understanding of Each View Point—Hopes of Unity Dawning.

The principal cause of irritation that remains to this day is that of the popularly attributed attitude of both branches toward the negro. Members of each side have permitted themselves to be biased in their feelings, at least, by what individuals on either side might say or write concerning the negro. Most Southern people really believe that our Northern brethren literally "take the colored brother to their arms, homes, and hearts" because he is a negro; and most Northern people believe that our Southern brethren cannot do even common, ordinary justice to a colored person, not to say have any sort of communication or affiliation with him, simply because he is black. But it is not the informed members on either side who hold such erroneous views, though, sad to say, a majority on both sides have become satisfied that their impression on these matters is the correct one.

There are some actions on both sides which, to one taking a surface view, would seem to give grounds for the view held. The Southern branch, after the close of the war, gave to the colored people who remained in her communion (where they had been since she had given them the gospel, her members and officials being the first to take the gospel to the negro) all the Church property used by the negroes under her communion. The negroes who did not remain in the Southern branch nor go to either one of the exclusive

organizations for negroes went to the Northern branch. It is simply stating the truth of history to say that ninety-nine in a hundred of these latter believed that they were to be treated in that branch just as were the white members in every respect—even believing that their membership carried with it complete social equality. To say that the Northern branch was in any way to blame for this erroneous impression on the part of her colored members would be to uncharitably charge her with a grave offense—too grave for any serious and informed, candid person to even entertain. But the negro did—and does—entertain that idea. Hence his disappointment in many things he had pictured out for himself has been great. And too many white people on both sides have been guilty of assisting him in these views, many Southern people making political capital out of it against Northern people, many Northern people using it to keep up a case against the Southern people. In too many instances members, and even ministers, and, sad to relate, some editors, on both sides, have used it to keep the two branches of the Church prejudiced against each other. Only in knowing the entire truth can justice be done and can unity based on love be looked for by all. In some writings that purport to be accurate history the Northern branch is referred to as "de Ole John Wesley Chu'ch," in recommending it to the negroes. Also by some of these writers it is called "the parent Church," "the original Church," "the mother Church," etc. Of course all Northern members who read this, and who know the truth, deplore the use of such terms on the part of any one pretending to write the truth in the name of a great Church. And some writers on the Southern side have written as if the entire North-

ern branch, officially and deliberately, had conspired to break up the Southern branch, and to so bias the public mind as to make it odious in popular esteem.

The time has come for all the members on both sides to know the exact truth. And in this knowledge will come that complete understanding which alone will enable each to see from what point of view the other has looked at all these questions. And then will come the heart reunion—the oneness of those who are already one in doctrine, belief, and religious practice. Then it will be understood that the reason the Northern branch has always refused to elect a colored bishop to preside over the 1,750 colored preachers who are pastors of the more than 280,000 colored members belonging to her communion (even when they assured the General Conference—as they did in Chicago in 1900—that they would never permit their colored bishop to go among or embarrass the white members, nor expect them to preside over a white Conference) was because of her settled policy to ignore altogether, in her official acts and utterances and her records, anything that would even appear to recognize a difference because of color. And it is a hopeful sign that the Southern brethren are beginning to recognize this fact in the attitude of the Northern branch, and that the Northern brethren are beginning to recognize the true friendship and helpfulness for and toward the colored people by the Southern branch, even from the very beginning when her sons (for the first time in history) began addressing themselves to the task and privilege of giving the negroes the gospel—to their uplifting in spirit, mind, manners, body, and morals. And each branch is learning that it is nothing against the practice of Christianity nor inconsistent with the deepest

profession of piety on the part of the members of the other branch to hold the same attitude regarding their personal preferences in social matters where the negro is concerned as they hold regarding any other person; that color has nothing to do with such matters. And Methodists are getting nearer together day by day in their efforts to "spread scriptural holiness over these lands," and are less and less turned aside by those issues that have only one real effect—to make them fight each other instead of uniting in an unbroken phalanx against the devil. To hasten this complete understanding of each other, and to more speedily bring about that close fraternity that will make us "brethren" again, is the purpose of this modest and imperfect little volume. While the older ones may not be able to completely accept the truth that has been hidden from their eyes so long, the younger ones may have it in its entirety. The old prejudices will fade as do the mists of May before the sun of high noon. For those "hardened in their minds," bitter in their hearts, set in their practices, let the young have that "charity" that "covereth a multitude of sins." Some of the older ones, in spite of these hindrances, have been true heroes of the cross.

But younger hearts and lives are drawing a deeper inspiration from the fountain of all truth. They are drawing nearer together as they draw nearer to the cross of Christ. They are becoming brothers indeed as they have been in name, as they know and understand each other. And it is they who must bring about the desired and long-prayed-for union of Methodism. They are the ones who are already preparing to bridge the dividing chasm. Young hearts and strong hands—ever the ones who have breasted the

midnight darkness of hopeless despair and heralded the dawn with the trumpet blasts of triumph and hope —are already drawing the hosts together. They will bridge the chasm over which unity will meet. On either side of the dark abyss they work, framing from Faith and Truth the girders and stringers and supports for the great central arch of Love. And we can already hear their cheerful song, "Children of the Heavenly King, as we journey let us sing," and the melody of the song from each side meets and quivers over the chasm in whose deeply cut channel the current of misunderstanding and wounded love flows, and the words and harmony blend and are taken up on the wings of a united faith to Him who "loved us and gave himself for us" all.

That the young Methodists, as especially represented in the Epworth Leagues of both branches of American Episcopal Methodism, may be so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of complete and sincere fraternal unity as to "know the truth" that makes us "free," and thus bring about a perfect oneness of heart, purpose, and life to the long-divided Methodist family, is the purpose and prayer of the writer. May we all return to that real brotherly, godlike condition of heart as shown by the "Friend of God" to contentious Lot:

"Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, . . . for we be brethren!"

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